LA BAGATELLA;

OR,

DELINEATIONS OF HOME SCENERY.

A DESCRIPTIVE POEM.

IN TWO PARTS.

WITH

NOTES,

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL.

BY WILLIAM FOX, JUN^R.

" I have devoted this book to my kindred and friends, to the end, " that when they have lost me, which they will do soon, they may " there retrace some of my qualities and humours, and, consequently, " that their remembrance of me may be more lively and entire."

MONTAIGNE's Preface to his Essays.

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INTRODUCTION.

It may, perhaps, amuse my readers to learn the history of the following BAGATELLE; which is, briefly, this: It happened, that on a fine morning, in the early part of the last Spring, having just recovered from the languors of an indisposition, I strolled forth through the fields, that lie contiguous to my habitation; and, feeling greatly revived by the genial warmth of the air, and the fresh and blooming aspect of every object around me, I could not forbear, on returning from my walk, to express myself in terms, perhaps too enthusiastic, of the beauties of the country, and the pleasantness of the scenery, over which I had rambled.

A lady, who was then visiting in my family, rallied me a great deal on the poetic fervour of my descriptions, but sarcastically lamented, that my labours should have been employed on scenes so entirely unworthy of the embellishment, which I had bestowed upon them; and concluded, by triumphantly asking, "What of Sylvan, or of rustic beauty, could be any where found at a distance of not more than three miles from the metropolis, within the din of its noises, and the very smoke of its chimnies?"

Piqued by the severity of the observation, my spirit inwardly muttered, " Although, my fair friend, you despise now these home-scenes, in the praises of which I am so lavish, yet I will, methinks, one day compel, even *you*, to allow, that they are not destitute of every attraction; and that, if to your eyes they can present no real verdure, you shall one day confess, that at least they " look green in song."

Pleased, and strongly impressed with such an idea, I examined, with some attention, the capabilities of my subject for poetic embellishment; and I will freely acknowledge, that the first result of this examination was by no means flattering to my wishes. Not, however, to be diverted from my design, and not easily to be discouraged by difficulty, I turned over, in my recollection, the many admired poems, which had been produced from materials even more barren and unyielding than thofe, on which I had fallen; and, thus animated, I resolved upon the prosecution of my design.

As many of my readers may be unacquainted with those [a] barren topics in which genius hath sometimes

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[a] Plus les choses sont seches et mal aiseés à dire en vers, plus elles frappent quand elles sont dites noblement, et avec cette elegance qui fait proprement la poësie.

BOILEAU. Lettre à Monsr de Maucroix.

chosen to exert its powers, it may not be unamusive to notice two or three of these singular triumphs of the Muse.

One of the earliest of these poems that occurs to my recollection, is the Secchia Rapita of Tassoni, first published in the year 1622. This poem, which was read with so much avidity, and by which its author acquired immortal fame, is founded simply upon a popular tradition of a certain wooden bucket, which is kept at Modena, in the treasury of the cathedral, that came from Bologna, and that had been forcibly taken away by the Modenese.

From no other materials than a * DESK did Boileau contrive to furnish a poem [b], which has been as much

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Poetry, like electricity, communicates its fire to every thing it touches, and animates and embellishes whatever it treats of. There seems to be no subject in the universe to which poetry cannot be applied, and that it cannot render equally brilliant and pleasing.

ELEMENTS of Universal Erudition.

* Le Lutrin.

[b] An odd occasion (says Boileau) gave rise to this poem. In a company I was lately engaged in, the conversation turned upon Epic Poetry: every one delivered his opinion, according to his abilities. When mine was asked, I confirmed what I had advanced in my Art of Poetry, that an heroic poem, to be truly excellent, ought to be charged with little *matter*, which it was the business of invention to support and extend. The opinion was warmly contested: but, after many reasons for and against,

admired, and as frequently quoted, as almost any other of the productions of that celebrated writer.

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it happened, as it generally does in these sort of disputes, that nobody was convinced, and that each continued in his own opinion. The heat of dispute being over, we talked on other subjects, and laughed at the violence into which we had been betrayed, in discussing a question of so little importance. We moralized on the folly of men, who pass almost their whole lives, in treating the greatest trifles in a serious manner, and in making, to themselves, an important affair of something quite indifferent. To this purpose, a country gentleman related a famous quarrel, that had lately happened in a little church in his province, between the treasurer and the chanter, the two principal dignitaries of that church, about the place in which a reading-desk was to stand. We thought it a ridiculous affair. Upon this one of the critics in company, who could not so soon forget our late dispute, asked me, if I, who thought so little *matter* necessary for an heroic poem, would undertake to write one on a quarrel so little abounding in incidents? I said, Why not? before I had even reflected on the question. This made the company laugh, and I could not help laughing with them; not in the least imagining I should ever be able to keep my word. But finding myself at leisure in the evening, I revolved the subject in my mind, and having considered, in every view, the pleasantry it would admit of, I made twenty verses, which I shewed to my friends. They were diverted with this beginning. The pleasure which I saw these gave them, induced me to write twenty more. Thus, from twenty verses to twenty, I lengthened the work to near nine hundred. This is the whole history of the trifle I now offer to the public.

The Cyder of Philips, and The Fleece of Dyer, both of which are familiar to my countrymen, may be considered as subjects neither of them promising, but which, by the ingenuity of poetic fancy and embellishment, have obtained, for their authors, a high reputation.

The Trivia and the [c] Fan of Gay may, likewise, be adduced as examples of the slender foundation, on which

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The Lutrin of Boileau is the model on which the heroi-comic poems produced, since his time, have, in a great measure, been formed. It claims, with the Rape of the Lock, the honour of being one of the two most beautiful originals, in that species of composition, written in any language.

ANDREWS's Letters from France.

The Lutrin is a work entirely of genius; a castle in the air, supported only by the art and strength of the architect. We behold in it the genius that creates, the judgment which arranges, the imagination that enriches, and the strain that animates the whole.

M. FORMEY's Elementary Principles of the Belles Lettres.

[c] I am very much recreated and refreshed with the news of the advancement of the Fan, which, I doubt not, will delight the eye and sense of the fair, as long as that agreeable machine shall play in the hands of posterity. I am glad your Fan is mounted so soon, but I would have you varnish and glaze it at your leisure, and polish the sticks as much as you can. You may then cause it to be borne in the hands of both sexes, no less in Britain than it is in China; where it is ordinary for a Mandarine to fan himself cool after a debate, and a statesman to hide his face with it when he tells a grave lie.

Mr. POPE. Letter to Mr. Gay.

the poet laboured; nevertheless there are, perhaps, few productions of the Muse more spirited and lively than these two poems.

But the piece which, of all others, claims our astonishment and admiration in this catalogue, is, The Rape of the Lock; a poem, on which, as Dr. Johnson well observes, praises have been accumulated by readers of every class, from the critic to the waiting-maid; and on which the elegant author of the "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope," acknowledges, amongst other high encomiums, that "it is in this composition Pope principally appears a poet, in which he has displayed more imagination than in all his other works taken together."

And yet, let it be remembered, this unrivalled poem owed its existence to the trifling circumstance of Lord Petre cutting off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair!

The last instance that I shall recal to the reader, is, the Task of our late-lamented Cowper, who, from a sofa, one of the most uninteresting and sterile of all subjects, has given description and imagery that will delight as long as delineations of nature, and unaffected simplicity, are valued among us.

From these examples of ingenious execution, it will, perhaps, be thought, that I had little reason for despondency, on account of the barrenness of my subject, but that my principal apprehension should have

arisen from a distrust in the abilities so necessary for its embellishment.

Of this, for me to speak at all, would be highly indecorous; or, if allowable, of little avail; for of this the public alone have a right to determine. I would, therefore, only take the liberty of making a few remarks on the nature and design of my poem, leaving the judgment of its execution to that candour and indulgence, which are commonly shewn to first attempts in the Heliconian art.

A walk in the neighbourhood of the metropolis will be considered as a subject in itself so exceedingly dull and unentertaining, that I am aware I must encounter the strongest prejudices against the first opening of my design. My readers will naturally enquire, what objects can present themselves in any of the circumjacent villages in the least degree adapted to poesy? For such prejudices as these I can the more readily allow, having felt their strong and discouraging influence on my own intentions, when revolving in my mind the task I had undertaken.

To objections of this nature, I would reply, that I have sought, with some industry, into various records, of the places described; and I have the satisfaction to say, that, in this research, I met with many particulars and facts of a more interesting character than I had expected to find; and I will fain hope, more than will be expected by my readers. Of such I thought I was

at full liberty to avail myself, and of such I have accordingly made every use in my power; although I can with truth affirm, that I have herein adhered, in every single instance, to reality and fact, with one only exception, and in this I considered the present complection of the place as warranting the conjecture I have hazarded of its former state.

Being, however, dissatisfied with the poem, and having, in its execution, fallen so short of my own expectations, I appended to it, after its completion, the greater part of the [d] notes at the bottom of the pages, with the hope, that those who can take no interest in the unaffected delineations of nature in the text, may at least find some amusement from the variety of miscellaneous matter contained in the notes.

The principal aim in the poem, is, to describe [e] common objects in simple, natural, and artless language.

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[d] La maxime n'est point fausse, qu'il n'y a si méchant livre dont on ne puisse tirer quelque chose de bon: aux uns on loüe la doctrine, aux autres les expressions. S'il n'y a rien de bon de l'auteur, il rapporte possible quelque chose de rare qu'il a pris d'ailleurs. DE LA CONNOISSANCE des Bons Livres.

[e] The pleasure we receive from a representation of natural and simple manners, is irresistible and enchanting: they best shew human wants and feelings; they give us back the emotions of an artless mind, and the plain methods we fall upon to indulge them.

BLACKWALL's Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer.

[f] Simplicity in writing, however, is a quality of no small difficulty to attain; and I beg to remind my readers, that those works, which appear, of all others, the most familiar and [g] easy, have, oftentimes, cost the writers infinite labour and pains.

Hence I would solicit some indulgence, if I should be found, in any instances, either through inadvertency, or want of skill, to have deviated from a rule, which the nature of my subject so rigidly prescribes, and which I have so sedulously endeavoured to follow.

If, indeed, the style should be found to vary from this simplicity, it must, I am aware, be so far considered as unappropriate.

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[f] Dr. Warton, in his examination of the tragedy of Cato, has the following remark: "The poetry and energy of the diction, and the loftiness of the sentiments, copied, in a great measure, from Lucan, Tacitus, and Seneca the Philosopher, merit approbation. But I have always thought, that those pompous Roman sentiments are not so difficult to be produced, as is vulgarly imagined; and which, indeed, dazzle only the vulgar. A stroke of nature is, in my opinion, worth a hundred such thoughts as,

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station.

[g] Le plus grand art qu'il y ait, c'est de sçavoir cacher l'art: c'est par là qu'on ravit les hommes en admiration, leur faisant croire que l'on parle bien naturellement et sans affectation aucune.

Essai de La Maniere de Bien Parler.

To decorate common objects in lofty and epic language, would, in my opinion, be as great a violation of classic costume, as it would be to dress a shepherd in the garb of a hero, or to deck out a rustic in the robes of royalty.

Considering simplicity as a quality so indispensable in writings of this character, I beg leave to give one or two examples of the ill effects of a departure from it, by way of illustration of my remarks; and I hope I shall be excused in bringing forward the very respectable name of Mason on this occasion, who, in his English Garden, a poem highly and deservedly admired, has, in more instances than one, fallen into the error here alluded to.

The following passages will sufficiently illustrate my meaning.

> Does her (Nature's) hand
> Stretch forth a level lawn? Ah! hope not thou
> To lift the mountain there. Do mountains frown
> Around? Ah! wish not there the level lawn.
> Yet she permits thy art, discreetly us'd,
> To smooth the rugged, and to swell the plain.
> But dare with caution; else expect, bold man,
> The injur'd Genius of the place to rise[h].

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[h] ——— un esprit sublime en vain veut s'elever,
A ce degré parfait qu'il tache de trouver;
Et toujours mecontent de ce qu'il vient de faire
Il plait a tout le monde, et ne scauroit se plaire.

Again:

But, if thy faint springs
Refuse this large supply, (a river) steel thy firm soul
With stoick pride; imperfect charms despise:
Beauty, like virtue, knows no grovelling mean.

When Boileau read these words to his friend Moliere, to whom they are addressed, the latter, squeezing his hand with earnestness, said, "This is one of the best truths you have ever uttered. I am not one of those sublime geniuses of whom you speak; but such as I am, I must declare, I have never wrote any thing in my life with which I have been thoroughly satisfied."

M. Despreaux disoit que les vers les plus simples de ses ouvrages étoient ceux qui lui avoient le plus coûté; que ce n'est qu'à force de travail qu'on parvient à paroitre aisé à ses lecteurs; qu'on ôte par là toute la peine qu'on s'est donnée. Ce ne sont pas, continuoit-eil, les grands traits de pinceau, ni ces coups de maître qui arrêtent un ecrivain dans son progrès; ce sont quelquefois des niaiseries, qui coutent le plus à exprimer.

BOLACANA.

It is strange to see how differently the vanity of mankind runs, in different times and seasons. It is, at present, the boast of almost every enterprizer in the Muse's art, "that by his genius alone, and a natural rapidity of stile and thought, he is able to carry all before him; that he plays with his business, does things in passing, at a venture, and in the quickest period of time. In the days of attick elegance, as works were then *truly of another form and turn*, so workmen were of another humour, and had their vanity of a quite contrary kind. They became rather affected in endeavouring to discover the pains they had taken to be correct. They were glad to insinuate how labo-

I appeal to the judgment of every man of taste, whether this is not giving an undue elevation to a subject, which will admit only the [1] simplest colourings, and whence every idea of empassioned declamation and pomp ought to be proscribed.

As it would appear invidious to the merits of a writer so generally elegant and correct, and whose

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riously, and with what expence of time, they had brought the smallest work of theirs (as, perhaps, a single ode or satire, an oration or panegyrick) to its perfection.

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

Fenton, in his Observations on Waller, has given us a curious anecdote concerning the great industry and exactness with which Waller polished even his smallest compositions. "When the court was at Windsor, these verses (only ten in number) were writ in the Tasso of her royal highness, at Mr. Waller's request, by the late duke of Buckinghamshire; and I very well remember to have heard his Grace say, that the author employed the *greatest part of a summer* in composing and correcting them."

FENTON'S Observations on Waller's Poems.

[1] It requires (says an elegant writer) much greater strength of mind to form an assemblage of natural objects, and range them with propriety and beauty, than to bring together the greatest variety of the most splendid images, without any regard to their use or congruity; as in painting, he who, by the force of his imagination, can delineate a landscape, is deemed a greater master than he, who, by heaping rocks of coral upon tesselated pavements, can only make absurdity splendid, and dispose gaudy colours so as best to set off each other.

works do so much honour to English literature, I shall forbear to add to the foregoing extracts. The fame of Mr. Mason is too well established to be shaken by these slight instances of trivial imperfection; but I cannot persuade myself, that the amiable author would regret the exposure of a false taste, even in his own compositions, which, indeed, is likely to be of more extensive ill effect from the celebrity, which they have so justly obtained among us.

An English garden, though a beautiful, is not a sublime, or a lofty subject; and is, therefore, [k] falsely decorated, when thus swelled with unappropriate dignity [l].

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[k] Be sure from Nature never to depart;
To copy Nature is the task of art.
The noblest poets own her sovereign sway,
And ever follow where she leads the way.

VIDA'S Art of Poetry.

It is certain there can be no decorum, no real beauty, without adhering to the truth of characters, and a just imitation of Nature.

GEDDES's Essay on the Composition and Manner of Writing of the Antients.

[l] Notwithstanding the foregoing strictures on the celebrated poem of Mr. Mason, I am quite willing to subscribe to the opinion of the author of The Pursuits of Literature, that "The English Garden, though *with a few faults*, deserves the thanks of every admirer of our national taste."

See Note to Pursuits of Literature, Dialogue I.

Let it not be imagined by any of these observations, that I am aiming thereby to screen my own work from the examination of criticism; on the contrary, so far from wishing to deprecate a liberal and candid investigation, I shall bow, with respect, to any one that will point out my errors; and if my gold is found to be but tinsel, and my polish glitter, I shall yield, with submission, to such a discovery, however painful. There is a [m] truth equally in taste as in morals; and I should exceedingly lament, that any of my little productions were the occasion of violating the one as well as the other.

Those chaste, correct, and elegant rules, which have been approved and followed by the best writers, I have endeavoured to conform to, so far as my judg-

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m The splendid union betwixt *truth* and *taste* is that which produced the classics of pure antiquity, which produced in times less remote, the classics of modern days, and which those, who *now* write, ought to cultivate with attention, if they have a wish to survive in the estimation of posterity. Taste is, in fact, but a species of inferior truth. It is the truth of elegance, of decoration, and of grace; which, as all truth is similar and congenial, coincides, as it were, spontaneously with the more severe and logical, but which, whenever destitute of that more solid support, resembles some fair but languid body, a body specious in feature, but deficient as to nerve, &c.

PHILOSOPHICAL ARRANGEMENTS, Vol. III.

ment would allow me to understand them: if, therefore, I have erred in these respects, it has been from a want of sagacity to discern, rather than a disposition to adhere to them.

Although, in the commencement of the following poem, the subject presented me with but a barren and desolate perspective, yet, in its progress, I will not dissemble, it awakened some not unpleasant thoughts, with which I will conclude these remarks.

It has been often observed of antient Attica, that every mountain and valley, and river and grove, of that once famous country, was hallowed by some deity or muse; and many of its more chosen spots, such as the valley of Tempé, the windings of Ilissus, and the luxuriance of Hymettus, have been celebrated by a hundred bards. Having myself never visited these famous regions, I cannot add my testimony to the verity or falsehood of such descriptions; but, if credit be due to the few modern travellers who have explored these antient seats of the Muses, they owe much of their celebrity to the strains, in which they are described.

If, in this matter, I may be allowed to judge from the present appearance of modern Italy, and a comparison of the beauties, which that country now exhibits to the traveller, with the descriptions left us by the antient Roman poets, I can here affirm, from m own observation, that some of its most vaunted situations

look sweeter, and far greener in song, than to the eye of the actual observer.

When wandering amid some of its most celebrated regions, I have oftentimes been struck with the disparity. Standing on the [n] muddy banks of the Tiber,

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[n] ——— Alas! is this the boasted scene,
This dreary, wide, uncultivated plain,
Where sickening Nature wears a fainter green,
And Desolation spreads her torpid reign?

Is this the scene where Freedom breath'd,
Her copious horn where Plenty wreath'd,
And Health, at opening day,
Bade all her roseate breezes fly,
To wake the sons of industry,
And make their fields more gay?

Where is the villa's rural pride,
The swelling dome's imperial gleam,
Which lov'd to grace thy verdant side,
And tremble in thy golden stream?
Where are the bold, the busy throngs,
That rush'd impatient to the war,
Or tun'd to peace triumphal songs,
And hail'd the passing car?

Along the solitary road
Th' eternal flint by consuls trod,
We muse, and mark the sad decays
Of mighty works, and mighty days!

ODE to the TIBER, written abroad,
by W. Whitehead, Esq.

how frequently have I exclaimed! "Is this that mighty river, whose fame was carried through every region of the then discovered world?" When loitering on the burning coast of Baiæ, and in its celebrated environs, how vainly have I sought the Elysium so exquisitely painted by Virgil!

If, then, the antient Greeks and Romans enticed the traveller to their shores, not less by their actual beauties, than by the strains in which they described them[o], is it illaudable in a Briton to feel equal ardour for the embellishment of his highly-favoured country, —a country which, I will boldly affirm, abounds little less in picturesque beauty and romantic scenery than the far-famed regions of Attica and Campania?

To verify this assertion, I need only call to the mind of the reader some of our most admired landscapes; such as the grandeur of the mountain-scenery in Wales, the lakes of [p] Cumberland and Westmore-

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[o] I beg it may not be understood, that I do not think many of these situations highly beautiful, particularly the magic coast of Baiæ. I only wish to hint, that there are few situations which have enjoyed the advantage of being so *beautifully* described.

[p] The Switzer, upon the banks of the Lake of Lucerne, may have a strait walk, and a few flowers at his door; or the inhabitant of * Ambleside plant his cabbages in rows.

TRANSLATOR'S Preface to D'Ermenonville's Essay on Landscape.

* One of the most beautiful villages in England, at the head of Windermeer, in Westmoreland

land, [q] Matlock Dale, the romantic boundaries and wild windings of the Wye, the Severn, and the Isis; the banks of the Thames near Richmond, the woody scenes of Norbury, with many others which might be easily named.

So enthusiastic am I in the admiration of my native country, that I anticipate, with some fervour of imagination, the time, when every river, and mountain, and grove, and valley, of Britain, shall be, by the Muses, hallowed like those of Attica. Some of our poets have rendered thus interesting different parts of the country in which their lot has happened to be cast; and we visit, with tenfold delight, the spot which a [r] Pope, or a Cowper, has rendered celebrated by their

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[q] "Matlock, in Derbyshire," says the writer of the preface above quoted, "resembles this celebrated vale of antiquity (the Thessalian Tempé) in many striking particulars."

JULY 2, 1741.

[r] Your letter found me just upon my return from an excursion into Berkshire, where I had been paying a visit to a friend, who is drinking the waters at Sunninghill. In one of my morning rides over that delightful country, I accidentally passed through a little village, which afforded me much agreeable meditation; as, in times to come, perhaps, it will be visited by the lovers of the polite arts, with as much veneration as Virgil's tomb, or any other celebrated spot of antiquity. The place I mean is Binfield, where the poet, to whom I am indebted (in common with every reader of taste) for so much exquisite entertainment,

verse. With the hope of conveying somewhat of interest to scenes and to objects, that many will consider as possessing no attractions in themselves, I wrote the following poem, which, if destitute of every other merit, at least possessed the charm, in the composition of it, of strewing, with [s] flowers, the dull diurnal path of its author.

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spent the earliest part of his youth. I will not scruple to confess, that I looked upon the scene where he planned some of those beautiful performances which first recommended him to the notice of the world, with a degree of enthusiasm; and could not but consider the ground as sacred that was impressed with the footsteps of a genius, that undoubtedly does the highest honour to our age and nation.

FITZOSBORNE'S Letters.

[s] "It seems to me," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "that the object and intention of all the arts, is to supply the natural imperfection of things, and often to gratify the mind, by realizing and embodying what never existed but in the imagination. It is allowed on all hands, that facts, and events, however they may bind the historian, have no dominion over the poet or the painter. With us, history is made to bend and conform to this great idea of art. And why? Because these arts, in their highest province, are not addressed to the gross senses, but to the desires of the mind, to that spark of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed, and pent up by the world which is about us."

DISCOURSE XIII.

I will, however, indulge the hope, that this feeble essay may awaken in those who ſhall bring happier powers to the task, a desire to embellish the more favoured scenes of our island. That which it has been my lot to chuse, must certainly be allowed to be, of all others, one of the most unfriendly to poetic fancy; and, if I have been so fortunate as to plant a flowret in the wild, over which I have trodden, what may not be expected from cultivating our fairest tracts, where imagination has only to paint the scenery, as nature discloses it?

W. F. Junr.

GROVE-PLACE, HACKNEY,
JULY 11, 1801.

Bacon dit que l'histoire feinte a été inventée pour donner quelque satisfaction à l'esprit aux endroits ou la nature des choses le denie, le monde etant inferieure à l'ame humaine, qui cherche une bonté plus exacte que ce qu'elle voit d'ordinaire.

DEFENSE des Fables.

It is curious to reflect, that the exertions of art seem to arise from the disappointment of the human mind, sated, disgusted, and tired with the monotony of the real persons and things which this world affords, so full of imperfection, and accompanied with so much misery, strife, and injustice. In proportion to the serenity and goodness of the mind, it naturally turns away from such a state of things, in search of some other, more grateful and consoling.

BARRY's Letter to the Dilettanti Society.

LA BAGATELLA;

OR,

DELINEATIONS OF HOME SCENERY.

PART I.

O PRIMA VERA GIOVENTU DE L'ANNO,
BELLA MADRE DI FIORI,
D' ERBE NOVELLE, E DI NOVELLI AMORI;
TU TORNI BEN.

GUARINI.

LA BAGATELLA;

MAY, 1800*,

OR,

DELINEATIONS OF HOME SCENERY.

'Tis lovely May; and Nature's freshen'd face
Is all o'erhung with new-blown flowret bells,

* Objections have frequently been made to the descriptions of Spring, as given by our English poets; and, in general, with

Cull'd from the primrose paths of laughing Spring.
The azure brightness of the dappled sky,
By long, light, shiver'd clouds, just marbled o'er,
Cheers and revives the sight. While the gay sun

justice. I think it sufficient to observe, by way of apology for my own practice, that the Spring described by me, was one of the most forward and beautiful ever known in this country.

Ver. 6.] In mild climates, and serene skies, the worship of the sun must be very ensnaring. It is the most obvious and general species of idolatry, varied into a thousand shapes, widely spread, and of the longest continuance: nor is it any wonder, that men, ignorant of a higher cause, should adore so bright an object, at whose recess the world mourns, the heavens lour, the stars retire, and the earth is stript of her fruits and verdure; whereas all nature smiles at his return; the seas are calm, the rivers clear, the sky serene, the air benign, and birds and beasts, and plants and men, revive at the touch of his enlivening ray.

LETTERS concerning Mythology.

In North America there is a fine country, lying between 33 and 37 degrees of north latitude. It is a vast valley, bounded on the east and north by a chain of high mountains, called the Apalakes. The present inhabitants of this country, the Apalakites, have no records but tradition. As for their religion, they worship the sun, whose beams they believe to be of such virtue, as to give life and motion to every living thing: from him, they say, the various species of animals draw vigour and health, the hills and vales their fruitfulness, and the world itself its stability and duration. Their daily worship is simple and pure; they

Gilds the rich landscape round; th' earth-roosted lark,
With fluttering wing, and sharp quick-quivering note,
Soars upward, gladden'd by the morning air,
The soft and tender breath of balmy spring.
The early rose, the pale-hu'd hyacinth,

stand in the door of their house; they salute the sun at his rising, and sing hymns to his praise. On solemn days, instead of putting beasts to death, in honour of this source of life, they burn perfumes, and celebrate in songs his glory and beneficence. This is accompanied with alms to the poor, and such presents to their jaouäs, (priests) who are likewise their physicians, as are necessary to their subsistence.

Ver. 11.] This beautiful and fragrant flower has not been more highly celebrated by the poets of modern times than by those of antiquity. The antients were, indeed, particularly fond of the Rose, which they considered as the favourite of the Spring, and one of the most delicious ornaments of that gay season, as may be seen in one of Anacreon's odes.

ODE V.

ON THE ROSE.

To make the beverage divine,
Mingle sweet Roses with the wine;
Delicious will the liquor prove,
For Roses are the flowers of love:
And while with wreathes of Roses crown'd,
Let laughter and the cup go round.
Hail, lovely Rose, to thee I sing,
Thou sweetest daughter of the Spring:

Rathe primroses, and modest violets,

All mortals prize thy beauties bright;
In thee the powers above delight.
Gay Cupid, with the Graces bland,
When lightly bounding hand in hand,
With nimble feet he beats the ground,
Shows his bright locks with Roses crown'd.
Here then the flowery garland bring;
With numbers sweet I'll wake the Spring,
And, crown'd with Roses, heavenly flowers,
Admitted Bacchus to thy bowers,
With snowy-mantled Sappho gay,
I'll dance the feather'd hours away.

FAWKES's Translation.

Again, in his bewitching ODE on the SPRING.

See! Winter's past; tho' seasons bring
Soft breezes with returning Spring;
At whose approach the Graces wear
Fresh Roses in their flowing hair.

IBID.

Among the few Fragments of the tender SAPPHO, we have one short Ode to this favourite Flower.

ON THE ROSE.

Would Jove appoint some flower to reign,
In matchless beauty on the plain,
The Rose (mankind will all agree)
The Rose, the queen of flowers should be,
The pride of plants, the grace of bowers,
The blush of meads, the eye of flowers;

White flowering lilacs, harebells stain'd with blue,
And such-like fragrant flowers, now shed their bloom,
With sweetest odours scenting ev'ry gale.
Ere this the feather'd race have told their joy;
And thousand unfledg'd throats now strain to join
The choral harmonies, that hail the year.
First came the swallow, summer's harbinger,
From distant lands, to skim and float in our's.

Its beauties charm the Gods above,
Its fragrance is the breath of love;
Its foliage wantons in the air
Luxuriant, like the flowing hair:
It shines in blooming splendour gay,
While zephyrs in its bosom play.

Ver. 12.] Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies.

MILTON's Lycidas.

Ver. 20.] The emigrations of swallows are remarkable: they leave us at the latter end of September, and a few days before their departure, they assemble, in vast flocks, on house-tops, as if to deliberate on the fatiguing journey that lies before them. This is no slight undertaking, as their flight is directed to Congo, Senegal, and along the whole of the Morocco shore. There are some, however, left behind, that do not part till eight or ten days after the rest: these are chiefly the latter weakly broods, who are not yet in a condition to set out.

Those that migrate are first observed to arrive in Africa about the beginning of October. They are thought to have performed

The nightingale, the lover's favourite bird,
Next follows, soothing oft his evening walk.
The cuckoo's tame and solitary call,
Still from the quiet grove is often heard.
From each low shrub, from ev'ry budding spray,
Soft flutt'rings rustle, or sharp twitterings sound.
Thus, as the season gay, lightsome of heart,

their fatiguing journey in the space of seven days. They are sometimes seen, when interrupted by contrary winds, wavering in their course, far off at sea, and lighting upon whatever ship they find in their passage. They then seem exhausted with famine and fatigue; yet still they boldly venture, when refreshed by a few hours rest, to renew their flight, and to continue the course which they had been steering before.

Ver. 21.] El rosignol, che dolcemente a l'ombra
Tutte le notte si lamenta e piagne.

PETRARCH, Sonn. x.

It is well known, that the nightingale, though its song is by no means confined to the night, as some of our poets seem to think, begins its song frequently in the evening, and sometimes continues it the whole night: and the inimitable Shakspeare has taken care to notice the circumstance of its continuing, if undisturbed, for weeks together, upon the same tree, where it will sit nightly in the same place, singing its tender requiem.

Ver. 27.] The mind, in these early seasons of the day, is so refreshed in all its faculties, and borne up with such new supplies of animal spirits, that it finds itself in a state of youth, especially

And raptur'd with the sweets that round me rise,
My morning walk I once again pursue.

when entertained with the breath of flowers, the melody of birds, the dews that hang upon the plants, and all those other sweets of Nature, that are peculiar to the morning.

It is impossible for a man to have this relish of being, this exquisite taste of life, who does not come into the world before it is all noise and hurry; who loses the rising of the sun, and still hours of the day, and, immediately upon his first getting up, plunges himself into the ordinary cares or follies of the world.

TATLER, Vol. VI. No 263.

Ver. 28.] "I am transported," says Vidal, "when I behold the renewed verdure, the expanding flowers, the melodious birds; and I revive with the reviving Spring, which re-animates all nature, and pours into my soul the soft effusions of love."

HISTORY of the TROUBADOURS.

Le doux printems revient, et reanime à la fois,
Les oiseaux, les zephirs, et les fleurs, et ma voix.

LES JARDINS, Chant I.

Heureux qui, contemplant cette scene imposante,
Jouit de ses beautes! plus heureux qui les chante!
Pour lui tout s'embellit; il rassemble à son choix
Les agrémens epars et des champs et des bois,
Et dans ses vers brillans, rivaux de la nature,
Ainsi que des objets, jouit de leur peinture.

L'HOMME DES CHAMPS, Chant IV.

The beauties of the morning have been celebrated by a thousand pens; and this season being considered as peculiarly pro-

And first the low and pond'rous gate I turn,
That bounds the path. Then to a milder scene,
Where hedge nor fence exclude the passing gale,
And where, hard by, a still and rippling spring
Steals its clear waters. There, at sober noon,
The thirsty schoolboy, with his folded hat,
Oft stoops to drink, and triumphs in the draught.
Now by young-springing corn I pass, and o'er
A rugged unaccommodating stile,
(The terror of our fair) whence gently winds
My fav'rite wand'ring path, the meads along.
Close at its side the streamlet murmurs on,

pitious to the imagination, it has been always the favourite time of the poets. Milton loved to greet

The opening eye-lids of the Morn.

LYCIDAS.

From the regularity of his pursuits, (says Mr. Warton) the purity of his pleasures, his temperance, and general simplicity of life, Milton habitually became an early riser. Hence he gained an acquaintance with the beauties of the morning, which he so frequently contemplated with delight, and has, therefore, so repeatedly described, in all their various appearances: and this is a subject which he delineates with the lively pencil of a lover. In the Apology for Smectymnus, he declares, " those morning haunts are where they should be, at home: not sleeping or con-

By drooping willows shaded, and o'erhung
By spreading elders, whose low-bending boughs
In the cool water dip their fragrant flowers.
Pendant with night-fall'n dew the early grass
Drips o'er the path, or in the sunny gleam,
As chrystal sparkles on an emerald stem.
On either hand the flower-enamell'd meads
Swell with the varied blossoms of the spring.
The modest daisy, the wild marigold,
The deep-red poppy, and the yellow orchis,
With variegated tints, enrich the green.
Oh, how I love to stop and loiter here,
On the green bench, beneath the willow tree,

cocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring; in winter, often before the sound of any bell awakens men to labour or devotion; in summer, as oft as the bird that first rouses, or not much tardyer, to read good authors, &c." Prose Works, edit. 1738, Vol. I. 109. In L'Allegro, one of the first delights of his chearful man, is to hear "the lark begin her flight." His lovely landscape of Eden always wears its most attractive charms at sun-rising, and seems most delicious to our first parents, "at that season prime for sweetest scents and airs." In the present instance, he more particularly alludes to the stated early hours of a collegiate life, which he shared, "on the self-same hill," with his friend Lycidas, at Cambridge.

See WARTON's Milton.

To list the trembling of the water by,
To watch the herd that in the meadow graze,
Or track the labourer to his morning toil.
Or, if my vagrant eye should rove so far,
To tell the turrets of the distant town,
Pleas'd with the space that rolls 'twixt them and me!

Hence, oft as turns my path, I backward turn,
To spy, at intervals, our village tower,
Just peeping forth 'twixt yonder aged elms.
In this lone path, the foot of passenger

Ver. 55.] The murmuring of streams, and the noise of running waters, have been the frequent and favourite themes of poets; and, indeed, in warm and eastern countries, water-falls and fountains are luxuries, of which we have little idea in our northern latitudes.

We are told, that instruments of music, and the murmuring of waters, were the remedies recommended to Mæcenas in those continual watchings which so much distressed him in the three last years of his life.

The Indians, as Philostratus reports, conducted their kings to rest with the sound of instruments.

The Gymnosophists, and Pythagoras himself, were, every night, lulled to sleep with the pleasing sound of instruments.

Ver. 62.] Hackney church, the old tower of which still remains.

I seldom meet, save one good careful dame,
Who, as the morning punctual, tends her charge,
A ruddy blooming child on either hand
To daily school.—" Good-morrow ! sir," she cries,
With curtsey dropp'd. " Good-morrow," I rejoin,
And onward each our destin'd journey wind.
Far to the right the nursery extends,
The school of plants, where, as in other schools
Scions are form'd, and cultur'd for the world,
Rear'd but to be remov'd to stranger soils,
The greater part condemn'd, alas ! by Fate,
To droop and die in yonder sickly town.
Some, as the mournful yew, or stately fir,
To deck a church-yard path perchance may go.
The lilac, and the delicate liburnum,
Ah ! luckless lot, in some obscure pent court
Are doom'd, perhaps, to wither side by side.
The jasmine sweet, and tall geranium,
The windows of spruce drawing-room may grace,
Whilst the fair hyacinth, the early rose,
The tender myrtle, and the blushing pink,
Are carefully in decent chamber watch'd,
Fit subjects for a lady's tender care.

Of this wide garden, such the varied fate,
Resemblance not unapt to common schools,
Whence to the wayward world the cultur'd youth,
And finish'd maiden, are transplanted wide
To other scenes. To happier some, perchance,
Whilst many go, as here, to pine and die,
The victims sad of an unkindly soil.

From those rich cultur'd scenes I turn me now
Along the rough unbeaten summer track,
Traffick'd alone from the near grounds to bear
The harvest load, where the deep rut forbids
The winter passage. Here th' unshelter'd fields
Extend to many a distant acre round,
Green with the spiral shoots of springing corn.

This rude untrodden path I joy to tread,
For pleasant thoughts it oft hath conjur'd up
Of grassy lanes in country, lone and wild,
Deep-rutted, plashy, and that poorly serve
To link the hamlet to the distant town,
O'er which the farmer, with his sturdy team,
To weekly market drives the pond'rous load;
Or where, with dairy treasures richly charg'd,
Forth on old *gray* his thrifty house-wife goes.

Onward I press towards yonder scatter'd pile,
Where now the long brick wall in ruin hangs,
Whilome the falling mansions honour'd bound.
Perhaps, for history is silent here,
And we may guess at will—perhaps some cit,
Grown wealthy, here, retir'd in peace, to pass
His latter days. Some courtier here, perchance,
Erst liv'd in pomp, and feast, and revelry.
How alter'd now the scene!—how chang'd the fate!
Where erst the chateau rear'd its gaudy head,
Where spread the gay saloon, or painted hall,
And where the corridor, stretch'd far along,
Echoing to festive song, or footing dance,
Now but a wretched, naked ruin shows!
Where pauses oft the passenger to trace
The deep foundations of the antique pile!
The summer bower, the only relic spar'd
From the rude grasp of Time's relentless hand,
Now, for a home, yon squalid labourer serves.
Where erst the garden lay, with flowers o'erstrown,
A fragrant wilderness of thousand sweets,
None wander now, save, to their lonesome shed,
The sun-burnt brickman, with his screaming child,

Mean, dirty, wretched, beggarly, and poor.
Yon sloping mound, whose fresh green swelling banks
Now serve to teach the straggling cattle law,
Once stood the bulwark firm of hostile camp;
Once echoed to the silver trumpet's sound,
The clash of armour, and the shout of war.
And these low meadows to the traveller shew,
Where many a Roman, many a Briton fell.
But hence to yonder crowded way I turn,
Now half obscur'd by clouds of gathering dust,
From foot of horse, or frequent carriage driv'n.
The punctual stage, the crouded caravan,
Light curricle, or close-pack'd one-horse chair,
The cockney spark goading his worn-down hack,
The sandman with his ass, the loaded barrow,
Each, with the dust half choak'd, the other drives,
And press, with posting haste, to yonder town.
I cross, and 'twixt a range of tenements,
Filthy and mean, to moping Hoxton come,

Ver. 152.] So extremely harsh and dissonant are the names of the several places described in this poem, that I have, in almost every instance, either suppressed them, or given them an antient termination. In the present case, however, I have preserved the original, *Hoxton*, as peculiarly characteristic and descriptive of

Dull, melancholy place, where the tall trees,
And uncouth buildings—massy, old, and drear,

the actual flatness and dead monotony of the town. The complaint of the harshness of proper names, and of their frequent incongruity with poetic composition, is by no means a novel one. Pliny, in one of his letters to Caninus, on his design of writing a poem upon the Dacian war, remarks, "Some difficulty you will find in reconciling those barbarous and uncouth names, especially that of the king himself, to the harmony of Grecian numbers. There is nothing, however, so hard, that art and industry cannot mitigate at least, if not absolutely subdue. If Homer is allowed to contract or lengthen, or change even Grecian names, which are nothing harsh to the ear, in order to make them run more smoothly in his verse; why should the same liberty be refused to you, especially since it is necessity, and not affectation, that pleads for the indulgence?"

When the rough names of heroes we declare,
Names, whose unpolish'd sounds offend the ear,
We add, or lop, some branches that abound,
Till the harsh accents are with smoothness crown'd,
That mellows ev'ry word, and softens ev'ry sound.

VIDA'S Art of Poetry.

Virgil abandoned in despair the design that he had formed, in his youth, of writing a poem on the wars of Rome, from the asperity of the antient Roman names.

Boileau, in the following well-known lines, most feelingly laments the untractableness of proper names, and their little adaptation to poesy:

En vain, pour te louer, ma muse toujours prête,
Vingt fois de la Hollande a tenté la conquête:

With fancies quaint oppress the passenger. 155
Where yet, e'en the usages of antique time,

Ce pays, où cent murs n'ont pu te resister,
Grand roi, n'est pas en vers si facile à dompter.
Des villes, que tu prends, les noms durs et barbares
N'offrent de toutes parts que syllabes bizarres;
Et qui peut, sans frémir, aborder Woerden?
Quel vers ne tomberoit au seul nom de Heusden?
Quelle muse à rimer en tous lieux disposée,
Oseroit approcher des bords du Zuiderzée?
Comment en vers heureux assiéger Doïsbourg,
Zurphen, Wageninghen, Harderwin, Knotzenbourg?

EPITRE IV. au Roi.

Wurts—ah quel nom, grand roi! quel Hector que ce Wurts!
Sans ce terrible nom, mal né pour les oreilles,
Que j'allois à tes yeux etaler des merveilles!
Bientôt on eut vu Skink dans mes vers emporté
De ses fameux remparts dementir la fierté.
Bientôt—mais Wurts s'oppose à l' ardeur qui m'anime.

EPITRE IV. au Roi.

Homer has been deemed peculiarly fortunate in writing in a language so favourable to the soft and musical terminations of poesy, for which the Ionian dialect is so happily adapted. Besides which, it has been remarked, that his ancestors, who had come and possessed themselves of all the dominions of Troy, had softened the names of the mountains, the rivers, and vales, and given them Grecian terminations; they had familiarized them into their language before he was born, and he just came in time to reap the benefit of it in his poetry.

And customs that, in villages remote,
Long since were exil'd, still are sacred held.
Here, at the well-known shop, where beards are mown
Clean for a penny, politicians meet
To settle state—and family-affairs;
To curse, for rise of bread, the new lord-mayor;
To curse the minister, 'cause Heav'n ordain'd
That torrent-rains our last year's crops should spoil.
Passing the porch, I sometimes have espy'd
(As the well-lather'd chin expectant turn'd,

In allusion to advantages of this nature, how beautifully does Boileau apostrophize at the close of the epistle above-cited.

O! que le ciel soigneux de notre poésie,
Grand roi, ne nous fit—il plus voisin de l'Asie!
Bientôt victorieux de cent peuples altiers,
Tu nous aurois fourni rimes à milleurs.
Il n'est plaine en ces lieux si seche et si sterile,
Qui ne soit en beaux mots par tout riche et fertile.
Là, plus d'un * bourg fameux par son antique nom
Vient offrir à l'oreille un agreeable son.
Quel plaisir de te suivre aux rives du Scamandre!
D'y trouver d'Ilion la poëtique cendre:
De juger si les Grecs, qui briserent ses tours,
Firent plus en dix ans que Louis en dix jours.

* Troye ou Ilion.

Waiting the stroke) the master, strapping slow,
With still returning hand the razor, whilst
He, to his customer, the pleasant tale
Told, with big emphasis, and strong assurance.
Meanwhile the hungry 'prentice by his side
With pewter bason standing, curses oft
The lengthen'd story, that thus cruelly
Him from his near-ey'd breakfast keeps so long.
The checker'd shutter here, in lieu of sign,
Shows where "neat wines" are sold, and to beguile
The passenger to loiter on his way,
On either side the door a bench invites,
Where the cool tankard he may sip at ease.
The chandler's, where, in broken windows lie
Commodities of ev'ry medlied class,
Whether to eat or drink, for use, or wear,
Shews on its front, in plain broad characters,
That "Ladies are genteelly taught within."
This senseless town no noises e'er disturb,
Save when the baker, at the hour of noon,
By sound of bell, to neighbours round proclaims
His oven waits; or now and then, perchance,
"Dust ho!" dreams slowly on the dreary road.

Hence, down a new-built street, late dignified
By Gloster's name, I turn me, and pursue,
To yonder terrac'd row, my easy walk.
There, lightly borne upon the western breeze,
Oft have I heard, and oft times stay'd to hear
The notes of swelling horn, by learner blown,
Now indistinct and low, now clanging loud.
To me there is " sweet magic in these sounds,"

Ver. 197.] Mr. Addison, in his seventh paper on the Pleasures of the Imagination, has remarked the effect of a particular and fortuitous impression on the senses, to recall the lively and instant recollection of scenes and places that we had not visited or reflected on for many years before. He has, however, omitted to notice the effect of particular sounds, the impression of which is so powerful, that governments have been obliged to prohibit the playing of popular tunes, from the well-known magic influence they would operate on the mind. The accidental hearing of a favourite air that we had listened to in our youth, has drawn tears from many an eye, on the quick recollection of how many sorrows had intruded since the ear last listened to those sounds. The Malade du Pays of the Swiss soldiery may be produced in a moment, by touching those airs which they had danced to among their native mountains.

Mr. Addison also remarks, that any single circumstance of what we have formerly seen, often raises up a whole scene of imagery, and awakens numberless ideas that before slept in the imagination; such a particular smell or colour is able to fill the mind, on a sudden, with the picture of the fields or gardens

And to far distant scenes and distant years,
Quick they transport my fancy, wand'ring wild.
For oft, by moonlight, thro' the still night-hours,
As slowly journeying by the Rhetian tide,
Delighted I have listen'd to the horn,
By Schwaggar blown, whose full and mellow tones,
In far-heard echoes, trembled down the stream.
Oft the dull hours of travel to relieve,
Whilst o'er th' rough road heavily we dragg'd
In forest drear, or when the chilly night
Made the long stage still longer to beseem,
The driver, to unsling his horn, I lur'd;
And, as the shrill sounds ran athwart the woods,

where we first met with it, and to bring up into view all the variety of images that once attended it. Our imagination takes the hint, and leads us unexpectedly into cities or theatres, plains or meadows. We may further observe, when the fancy thus reflects on the scenes that have past in it formerly, those which were at first pleasant to behold, appear more so upon reflection, and that the memory heightens the delightfulness of the original.

SPECTATOR, Vol. VI. N° 417.

Ver. 210.] By still midnight, that the moone did rise,
He walked up and doune;
Then a lightsome bugle heard he blowe
Over the bents so browne.

SIR CAULINE, Part I.

How have I linger'd o'er the moon-light scene,
Half raptur'd, whilst Giovanni, at my side,
Snor'd mainly! It was pleasant, too, to see,
When to the post we came, the horn unsling
From Schwaggar's shoulder, and to list the notes
By th' uncouth herald, loud and louder blown;
And, oft repeated, till the slumb'ring guard,
Slow-pac'd, and drowsy, turn'd the pond'rous bolts,
And ope'd his gate to let the wanderers in.
But once, and I can ne'er forget the time,
This uncouth melody struck on my ear
Unusual charm, and an unwonted power;
Sounds that deep fell, and that still vibrate there!
'Twas on a soft, serene, autumnal night,
As down my fav'rite Rhine I slowly sail'd,
Giovanni took the horn, well skill'd to play:
He gave the lovely airs of Tuscany;
Airs, that on Arno's shelving poplar banks,
Full oft we heard—or, by the magic shores
Of the Tyrrhenean wave, (whose glassy swell,

Ver. 230.] "We are fallen in love with the Mediterranean Sea." MEMOIRS of GRAY, p. 70.

Italy is the abode of so many classic recollections, that he who has visited this once famous country, can never look back to the

Where'er it travels, washes in its way
Some classic town, some Muse's honour'd haunt)

period but with sentiments of the most exquisite delight. Who, indeed, possessed of any sensibility, can ever tread those classic shores with indifference? Even Dr. Johnson, whom no one will charge with the extravagancies of enthusiasm, used to say, "A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great empires of the world, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean."

A traveller may surely then be pardoned in expressing no common degree of enthusiasm in visiting regions that have been once so famous. Who can wander, even now, unmoved, on the delicious coast of *Baia, that favourite resort of many of the most illustrious Romans? It was the place the Romans chose for their winter retreat, and which they frequented on account of its warm baths. Some few ruins of the beautiful villas that once covered this delightful coast, still remain; and nothing can give a higher idea of the prodigious expence and magnificence of the Romans in their private buildings, than the manner in which some of these were situated. Here, indeed, Luxury seems to have reigned in her most licentious refinements of all kinds, while the principal amusement of the place consisted in sailing upon the gulph in gaily-painted barks, accompanied with all the melting softness that exquisite wines, fine women, and rapturous music, could bestow.

* Nullus in orbe sinus Baiis praelucet amænis.

Pip'd by Italian mariner—Sweet ran
Along the wizard stream the mystic sound,
Echoing from steep to steep, and mountains told
To distant mountains the shrill melody.
With slow and ling'ring pace the vessel pass'd
The varying shores; now solemn, sombre, wild,
O'er-shadow'd by the pendant mountain's brow,
Now op'ning chearful to the level plain.
Still was the night, save, as we pass'd the town,
The house-dog bay'd—or, from the lonely tower,
The wakeful centinel the watch-word gave;
Or, from the lofty vine-clad mountain's top,
Broke faintly on the ear the tinkling chime

Ver. 245.] The tranquil manner in which we glided along the interesting scenery, afforded the most soothing and delightful sensations to my heart. This fascinating calm was now and then agreeably interrupted in passing the different towns, by the barking of the watch dog, or the striking of a clock. Sometimes, from the summit of a mountain, where I could just descry the cross-shapen spire, we heard the tinkling of the convent bell, summoning the pious inhabitants to their midnight services. Twice, in passing a lonely tower, we distinguished the distant voice of the wakeful sentry going his destined rounds. How many interesting objects! and with how many more might I enrich the catalogue! such as the tinkling of the sheep bells, and the lowing of the cattle among the herbage, and now and then

Of convent bell, calling to midnight prayers.
Slow mov'd the bark, and now the morning grey

the call of the boatmen to each other. When you consider that every sound trembles with such frequent reverberations along the river, or is reflected back from rock to rock with seven-fold repetition, you may conceive how much it must increase the effect of every murmur that broke the stillness. Just before day-break, I desired Giovanni to take my horn, and give some of his best airs, in his best and most sonorous manner. The effect was grand beyond description; the sound echoed from rock to rock, from mountain to mountain, and seemed to extend for many miles both up and down the river. For the last air, he gave with infinite propriety,

"Tell me, babbling echo, why," &c.

After which I desired him to sing it; and how often since have I repeated the closing lines of that beautiful song;

"From morn to night prolong the tale,
"Let it ring, let it ring, from vale to vale!"

O thou wizard stream! how frequently shall I look back to the many delightful hours, and days, and weeks, which I have passed by thy side! If streams are the haunts of fairies, how must thy enchanted borders be thronged by the light-footed train! Yes, my friend, in the dull hours that future life may chance to bring with it, I shall often look back to these delicious seasons of enjoyment; or when sickness turns me pale, and imprisons me in the narrow precincts of a chamber, I will then court the fairy sisterhood to weave for me anew those enchanted visions that so much captivated my imagination, whilst alternately

'Gan spread the horizon, when Giovanni seiz'd
The horn again. He blew a fav'rite air,
" Oh, tell me, babbling echo, why." The strain,
From rock to rock, from mount to mountain rang
Adown the stream, and " echo" oft gave back,
In soften'd notes, the well-tim'd melody.

But now the deep-red tints of breaking day
Had ting'd the summits of the vine-clad hills,
And lit the fanes, and tipt the turrets round,
When, with night-watching tir'd, well-pleas'd, I sunk
In slumbers soft—by fairy visions dress'd.

But hence, from scenes by memory long embalm'd,
That oft, as now, my fancy lead astray,

gliding on the surface, or wandering on the margin of my favourite river!

SKETCHES and OBSERVATIONS made on a Tour through various Parts of Europe, Letter VI.

Ver. 259.] A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
Those long-connected scenes where first they mov'd
Th' attention; backward, thro' her mazy walks,
Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
To temples, courts, or fields; with all the band
Of painted forms, of passions, and designs,
Attendant.

AKENSIDE.

I turn—to where, along the ingrate stream,
Yon close-built populous village stretches far.
Whither the convalescent oft repairs
To breathe, or where the new-made mother goes,
With babe and nurse, from chamber close and warm,
In solemn cavalcade, fresh air to seek.
Old Iseldon, tho' scarce, in modern song,

Ver. 261.] The New River, which though of such immense benefit to the metropolis, and so lucrative to the present proprietors, yet was the total ruin of its first projector, Sir Hugh Middleton. On the 20th September, 1608, Sir Hugh began, and on the 29th September, 1613, he completed this great work. He brought the water from Amwell in Hertfordshire, a distance of 20, but, from the necessity of making a detour, to avoid hills and vallies, it was increased to upwards of 38 miles.

This scheme was divided into 72 shares, which, for above 30 years, netted only £.5 a-piece. Each of these shares was sold originally for £.100, which have increased in value so considerably, as, not long since, to have been sold for £.10,000 a share. See PENNANT's London.

Ver. 267.] Iseldon, or Islington, is a place of high antiquity, and frequently mentioned with respect in antient records. When Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Kennelworth Castle by the Earl of Leicester, in 1575, among the many devices and pageants which were exhibited for his entertainment, one of the persons introduced was that of an antient *minstrel*, whose appearance and dress are minutely described by a * writer there present, and who

* Langham.

Nam'd but in scorn, may boast of honour'd days,

says, in enumerating his various ornaments, that, from his chain, hung a scutcheon, with metal and colour resplendent upon his breast, of the antient arms of ISLINGTON.

In a very antient ballad, entitled, " The Tournament of Tottenham," the name of this place again occurs, although the mode of spelling it somewhat differs.

It befell in Tottenham, on a clearr day,
There was made a shurting by the highway:
Thither came all the men of that countray,
Of HISSELTON, (Islington) of Highgate, and Hakenay.

It also again appears in a ballad, which has for its title, " The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington;" but, from various internal evidence, it is thought that another town of the same name in Norfolk, is here intended.

In antient records, the name of this place is written Isendune, Isendon, Iseldon, Yseldon, and Eyseldon. Skinner derives it from Gisel, a hostage, and Tun, a town. This etymology is not, I think, entirely satisfactory, as it does not appear that this place was ever called Giseltun, or Gistleton. Isendure, which name occurs in the most antient records belonging to the church of St. Paul's, as well as in Doomsday book, signifies, in the Saxon language, the Hill of Iron; in favour of which etymology, it may be adduced, that several springs of water, impregnated with that mineral, have been found near the village.

When the unfortunate Henry the VIth was brought a prisoner to London, he was met at Eyseldon by the Earl of Warwick, who arrested him there in the name of King Henry IV. and caused his gilt spurs to be taken from his feet.

For many a darling child of science there
Hath trimm'd his lamp, and wove his laurel-crown. 270

On the 13th June, 1381, in Wat Tyler's rebellion, "the commons of Essex went to the manor of Highbury, two miles north of London, belonging to the prior of St. John of Jerusalem, which they wholly consumed by fire *." The site of Highbury manor-house, in memory of this fact, still goes by the name of Jack Straw's Castle.

The Pied Bull, near the church, is said, but without sufficient foundation, to have been the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh.

LYSON's Environs of London, Vol. III. p. 138.

Ver. 269.] Samuel Clark, a learned orientalist, and one of the editors of the Polyglot Bible, was a schoolmaster at Islington in 1650. Ezekiel Tongue, author of several tracts against the Papists, and some treatises in natural history, about the year 1660, kept an academy for teaching young ladies Latin and Greek, in a large gallery of a house at Islington, belonging to Sir Thomas Fisher. Colonel Okey, an officer of eminence in Cromwell's army, and one of the judges of King Charles the First, is said to have been a drayman in a brewhouse at this place. Defoe, the well-known author of Robinson Crusoe, and many other works, received his education at Newington Green, and died at Islington in 1731. Alexander Cruden, author of the Concordance, died there in 1770. Joseph Collyer, who translated the Messiah and Noah from the German, and published some historical and geographical works, died there in 1776. Mrs. Collyer, who translated the Death of Abel, resided also at Islington.

* Stowe's Annals, 4to. p. 454.

There Addison, from public haunts withdrew,
To polish, to correct, to charm mankind.
Close on those skirts our Milton pass'd his days

Ver. 271.] I have, in my possession, an old edition of the Spectator, which, under the paper, N° 393, signed I, (one of the distinguishing marks of Addison) has this note: "By Addison, dated, it is supposed, from Islington, where *he had a summer residence*." The circumstance of Addison's residing at Islington not being noticed by any of his biographers that I have had occasion to consult, I considered it indispensably necessary to give my authority for the fact here inserted.

Ver. 273.] The poetical violence of Milton exposed him to numberless distresses and dangers, insomuch that, on one occasion, he was in the utmost fear of having his house demolished, as may be gathered from the following sonnet, which has this simple inscription as its title:

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

Captain, or colonel, or knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call Fame on such gentle acts as these;
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
The great Emathian conqueror did spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower

Of waning life—forsaken, blind, and poor.

> Went to the ground: and the repeated air
> Of sad Electra's poet had the power
> To save th' Athenian walls from ruin bare.

In these lines, Milton's consciousness of superior powers breaks forth; and the pride of genius confidently affirms what no inferior mind would have dared to assert, "that he knows the charms," and possesses the power of giving lustre to a name "o'er lands and seas," and in "whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms."

Milton has here most aptly introduced the two Greek poets, Pindar and Euripides. Plutarch relates, that when the Lacedemonian general Lysander took Athens, it was proposed, in a council of war, intirely to rase the city, and convert its scite into a desert. But, during the debate, at a banquet of the chief officers, a certain Phocian sung some fine antistrophics from a chorus of the Electra of Euripides; which so affected the hearers, that they declared it an unworthy act to reduce a place so celebrated for the production of illustrious men, to total ruin and desolation.

"Nothing," says Warton, "more strongly marks the improved critical discernment of the present age, than that it has atoned for the contemptible taste, the blindness, and the neglect of the last, in recovering and exalting the poetry of Milton to its due degree of cultivation and esteem: and we may safely prognosticate, that the posterities are yet unborn, which will bear testimony to the beauties of his calmer imagery, and the magnificence of his more sublime descriptions, to the dignity of his sentiments, and the vigour of his language. Undoubtedly, the Paradise Lost had always its readers; and, perhaps, more nume-

Thither the melancholy Collins fled, 275

rous and devoted admirers, even at the infancy of its publication, than our biographers have commonly supposed. Yet, in its silent progression, even after it had been recommended by the popular papers of Addison, and had acquired the distinction of an English classic, many years elapsed before any symptoms appeared, that it had influenced the national taste, or that it had wrought a change in our versification, and our modes of poetical thinking.

Among other proofs of our reverence for Milton, we have seen a monument given to his memory in Westminster Abbey. But this splendid memorial did not appear, till we had overlooked the author of Reformation in England and the Defensio: in other words, till our rising regard for Milton the poet had taught us to forget Milton the politician. Not long before, about the year 1710, when Atterbury's inscription for the monument of John Philips, in which he was said to be Soli Miltono secundus, was shewn to doctor Sprat, then dean of Westminster; he refused it admittance into the church, the name of Milton, as Dr. Johnson observes, who first relates this anecdote, "being, in his opinion, too detestable to be read on the wall of a building dedicated to devotion."

Ver. 275.] It may not be amiss to remind such as are accustomed to deride the pursuits of literature, and the patrons of men of letters, that Mæcenas, the favourite of Augustus, and the great encourager of the literati of the brightest era of Roman taste, was also one of the politest men of his time, and lived in habits of princely elegance and splendour. The * house of

* The ninth ode of the Epodes of Horace informs us, that the house of Mæcenas was raised

Quando repostum cæcubum ad festas dapes,
Victore lætus Cæsare,

The wand'rings of a wilder'd mind to soothe:

Mæcenas, we are informed, was situated on the * Esquiline hill, and was spaciously and magnificently built. The roof shone with gold; the walls were of the finest marble; the floor answered to the magnificence of the cielings, and the furniture was equally superb with the whole. Here he gave the most elegant and delicate entertainments, which, for taste, fancy, novelty, and variety, were inimitable. His table was served with the finest and the most delicious wines; among which, one was of Italian growth, to which, it is imagined, he gave his own name. He dressed with a studied elegance, and generally wore a purple robe with a long train, and often walked with Augustus and his other friends in his sumptuous gardens, adjoining to his house, ornamented with statues of the most exquisite sculpture. There was, according to antient custom, a small temple in his gardens, on the walls of which the poets, who paid their court to Mæcenas, used to write verses suitable to the divinity of the place.

Tecum sub alta (sic Jovi gratum) domo,
Beate Mæcenas, bibam?

When shall we quaff, my lord, the flowing wine,
Reserv'd for pious hearts, and joys divine?
Cæsar with conquest comes; and gracious Jove,
Who gave that conquest, shall our joys approve.

FRANCIS.

The house and tower of Mæcenas, according to some, are one and the same building. Horace, B. iii. Ode xxix. describes the prodigious height of this tower. According to Suetonius, Nero beheld the desolation of Rome, which he had set on fire, from this tower.

* Now Monte di S Maria Maggiore nipot, on which the author has passed many pleasant hours.

And there, of late, our British Boothby gave

To this happy retirement of Mæcenas we owe, besides his literary works, according to some, the invention of short-hand.

Ver. 276.] Sweet bard! belov'd by ev'ry muse in vain,
With powers whose fineness wrought their own decay:
Ah! wherefore, thoughtless, didst thou yield the rein
To Fancy's will, and chase her meteor ray:
Ah! why forgot thy own Hyblæan strain!
"Peace rules the breast, where Reason rules the day."

LANGHORNE'S Visions of Fancy.

"After his (Collins) return from France, the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington; there was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school. When his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity, to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, 'I have but one book,' said Collins, 'but that is the best.'

LIFE of COLLINS, by Dr. Johnson.

Dr. Drake has devoted one of his elegant * papers to an enquiry concerning "the frenzy of Tasso and Collins." "We have had one melancholy instance," says he, "and toward the middle of the 18th century, where disappointment operating upon enthusiasm, has induced effects somewhat similar to those recorded of the celebrated Italian. In the year 1756, died our lamented Collins, one of our most exquisite poets, and of whom, perhaps, without exaggeration, it may be asserted, that he par-

* Literary Hours.

The daring wild notes of the Lesbian muse.

took of the credulity and enthusiasm of Tasso, the magic wildness of Shakspeare, the sublimity of Milton, and the pathos of Ossian. He had early formed sanguine expectations of fame and applause, but reaped nothing but penury and neglect; and, stung with indignation at the unmerited treatment his productions had met with, he burnt the remaining copies with his own hands.

He who could feel, with so much sensibility, the sorrows and misfortunes of others, and could pour the plaint of woe with such harmonious skill, was soon himself to be an object of extreme compassion. His anxiety and distress, rendered doubly poignant by a very splendid imagination, in the event produced unconquerable melancholy, and occasional fits of frenzy; and, under the pressure of these afflictions, which gradually increased, perished one of the sweetest of our poets, and who ever approached the lyre with a mind glowing with inspiration.

It must be recorded, to the disgrace of Britain, that there are few countries on the face of the globe equally advanced in civilization, where so great a number of men of letters have been suffered to pine in indigence and want as in this island. The politics of Milton, and the eccentricities of Collins, may, in some degree, account for these individual instances of suffering; but it would be no difficult matter to add a thousand examples of those whose works have done immortal honour to their country, who, in their life-time, have wanted support for the day that was passing over them. At the commencement of the last century, (this note is written in the year 1801) I acknowledge we had many warm patrons of literature among the great, but now the character of Mæcenas is scarcely known in Britain; and the honours, which he enjoyed with the Roman people, seem little

And Isledon, as antient records tell,

coveted here. We are told, that it once happened, after that great patron and encourager of literature had just recovered from a dangerous illness, he went to the play: the audience, out of their great zeal and affection, as well as to do him honour, rose *, upon his first coming into the theatre, and, by a general applause, expressed their joy at his recovery.

Ver. 278.] See Translations of Sappho's poems by Sir ——— Boothby.

Sappho, who, on account of the sweetness and beauty of her verses, was honoured with the distinctive title of the tenth muse; and, after her death, the inhabitants of Mitylene went so far as to engrave her image upon their coins.

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* It was customary with the Romans to rise whenever a prince, or person of great distinction, came into the public shews; they offered up their vows, and clapped them at their entrance. Horace mentions these honours paid to Mæcenas by the Romans.

A poet's beverage humbly speak,
(Should great Mæcenas be my guest)
Crude vintage of the Sabine grape,
But yet in sober cups shall crown the feast;
'Twas rack'd into a Grecian cask,
It's rougher juice to melt away,
I seal'd it too—a pleasing task,
With annual joy to mark that glorious day,
When, in applausive shouts, thy name
Spread from the theatres around,
Floating on this our Tyber's stream,
And, Echo, playful nymph, return'd the sound.

FRANCIS's Horace.

In distant time, as now, had much to boast
Of other praise, in Nature's bounty rich.
For thither, then, from London's hectic town,

I have elsewhere given some instances of that panting for immortal fame, which is one of the peculiar characteristics of noble minds. There is not to be found, perhaps, a more striking example of this thirst for, as well as confidence, in future glory, than in Sappho, in the following short address to one of the richest and most considerable of the Lesbian dames, and which I have thus attempted to give in English verse.

When, base-born woman! thy mean dust is laid
In the cold earth, beneath the yew tree's shade,
Forth from Pieria then no muse shall bring
The blushing garlands of th' unfolding Spring;
But silent shalt thou lie, nor shall thy name
E'er grace the tablet of recording Fame.
Whilst, mark me well, my honours shall be told
Thro' ev'ry clime, age, sex, or young or old.
My strains shall swell in ceaseless melody,
Whilst *thy* low fault'ring voice but wakes to die!

Ver. 281.] In Lancham's account of Queen Elizabeth's entertainment at Kenilworth Castle, anno 1575, may be found the following curious speech of a person representing a "squier minstrel of Middlesex."

The minstrel declared, "how the worshipful village of Islington, well knoonen too bee one of the most auncient and best tounz in England, next to London, at this day, (as well at Cookez feast in Aldergate streete yeerely upon Holyrood day as allso at all solemn bridealez in the citie of London all the yeer after,

Her fam'd chalybeates oft allur'd the sick.
Her fresh lactarian draughts the babe sustain'd.

in well serving of * mylk for theyr flawnez, not yet pil'd nor chalked; of cream for theyr custardes not frothed nor thykned with floour; and of butter for theyr pastiez and pye paste, not made of well curds nor gather'd of whey in soomer nor mingled in winter with salt butter water'd or washt) did obteyn long agoo these worshipful armez in cooler and foorm as you see; which are a field argent as the field and ground whearin the milkwives of this worthy tooun doo trade for theyr living. On a fess tenny three platez between milk tankerds proper. The three milk tankerds az the proper vessell whearin the substauns and matter of theyr trade is too and fro transported. The fess tenny, which is a cooler betokening doubt and suspicion, az well to their markets and servants az to their customerz, that they trust not too farre, may bring unto them platez, that iz coyned sylver; three, that iz sufficient and plentie; for so that number in armorie may well signifie. For errast, upon a wad of oat straw a boll of furmenty. This skoochion, with beastz very aptly agreeing both to the armez and to the trade of the bearers, gloriously supported between a gray mare (a beast meetest for carrying of milk tankerds) her pannell on her bak, az alwaiz reddy for servis at every feaste and brydale at neede, and her silly fole fallow and flaxen mane after the fyre. In the skro under graven iz thear a proper word, well squaring with al the

* By this it appears, that Islington was as famous for its dairies formerly as now; and that formerly too, the milk dealers were not unacquainted with the mode of adulterating their commodity as practised by their more modern successors.

That oft, seen airy spire, so trim of late,
In wicker case array'd, is dear to me.
For, not remote the time, those walls within
Two much-lov'd sisters were to th' altar led.
And in yon village, late a father's roof

rest, taken out of Salern's chapter of things that most noorish a man's body, lac, caseus infans; that iz, good milke and yoong cheese. And thus mooch and oleaz you, quoth he, for the armez of our worshipful tooun; and thear withall made a mannerly leg, and so held his peas.

The number of cows now kept in the parish amounts from 1200 to 1500.

Ver. 285.] In the year 1787, Islington church underwent a thorough repair: when it being found necessary to make some alterations in the vane, the parish contracted with one Thomas Birch, an ingenious basket-maker, who undertook to inclose the spire from the ballustrade to the vane, with a case of wicker-work, and form within it a stair-case, which should afford a safe and easy passage to the top. This he performed in a little more than two months. His agreement with his employers was for the sum of £.20, and he was permitted to receive money for shewing his new mode of scaffolding, by which, though the price of admission to the stair-case was only six-pence each person, he reaped considerable profits. His exhibition was frequently advertised in the newspapers. A print of the church, engraved by Matthew Skinner, from a drawing made by himself, whilst the spire was inclosed within its wicker-case, was published in February, 1788.

LYSON'S Environs of London, Vol. III. p. 141.

I found, a valued home; whither, full oft,
With prattling nephew at my side, I trudg'd
Thro' heat or cold, to pass the frequent day.
Oh! happy days! Oh! hours to memory dear!
But now, alas! to memory only known!
The chearful hearth, where we were wont to sit,

Ver. 290.] Il y a une sensibilité qui nous intéresse aux lieux que l'on a habités, ou l'on a été elevé, qui ont été temoins de nos peines ou de nos plaisirs, à l'aspect melancholique des ruines.

L'Homme des Champs. Preface.

Ver. 295.] Were it necessary to justify the references which occur not only in the above passage, but in other parts of this poem, to myself, and my own connexions and concerns, I should be able to cite numberless examples of similar allusions from many of the best writers.

M. Boileau, in writing to M. de Maucroix upon the subject of his 10th letter, freely affirms, " Dans une nouvelle Epitre, que j'ai faite à propos de toutes les Critiques qu'on a imprimées contre ma derniere satire, Je conte tout ce que j'ai fait de puis que je suis au monde. J'y rapporte mes défauts, mon âge, mes inclinations, mes moeurs. J'y dis de quel pere et de quelle mere je suis né. J'y marque les degrés de ma fortune; comment j'ai été à la cour, comment j'en suis sorti; les incommodités qui sont survenuïs: les ouvrages que j'ai faits. Ce sont bien de petites choses dites en assez peu de mots mais il me paroit que tous ceux à qui je l'ai recitú en sont aussi frappés que d'aucun autre des mes ouvrages.

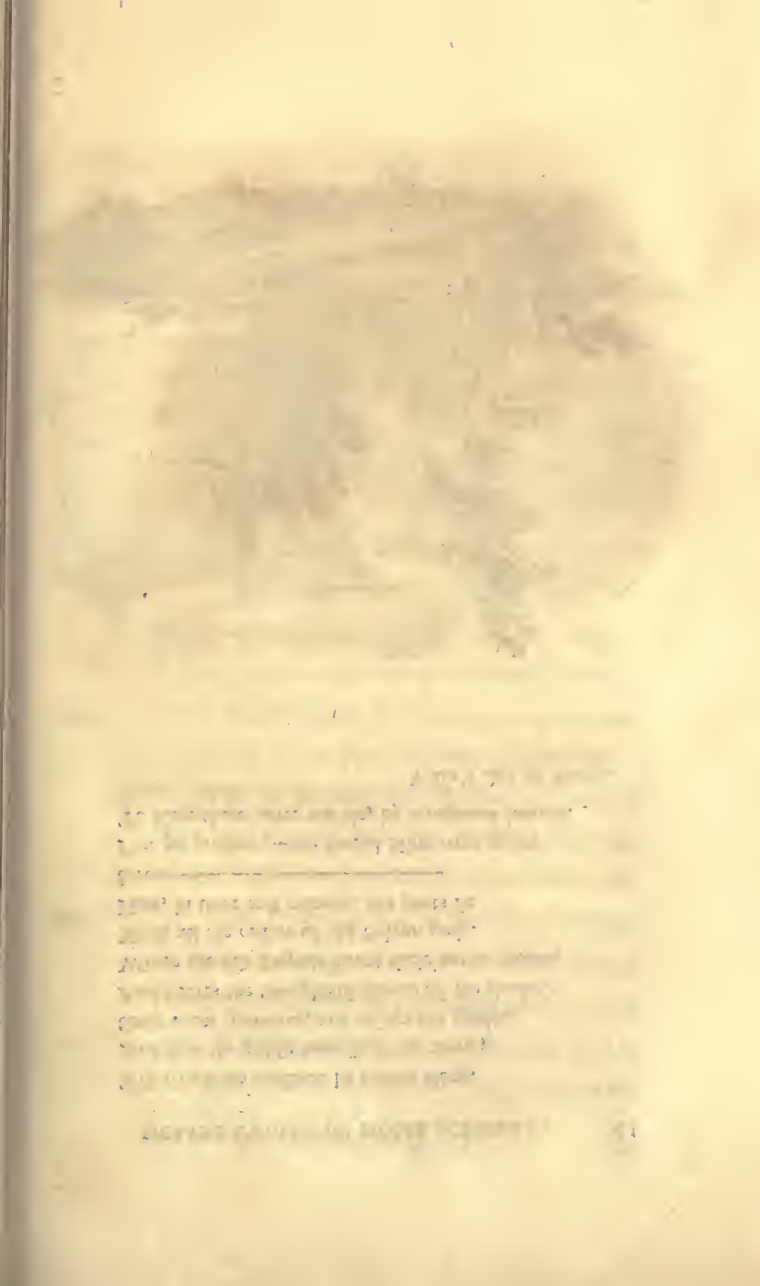
Oeuvres de Boileau.

By winter night, to chat the hours away,
Is now encircled by a stranger band;
To us unknown are they, and we unknown!
Yet oft, as now, tho' far at distance seen,
Thither I turn my sight, my fancy turn,
And summon to my view the ravish'd joys
That time hath mown, still sedulous to trace
Scenes that, on Memory's wing, no anguish bear.
But now the city's smoky skirts I press,
Where sons of traffic, in loud clamour pass,
Dinning their rude sounds in the traveller's ear.
Here, then, I cease awhile my artless strain;
Let those of cities tell, that cities love;
The country, and the rural scene be mine.
The jealous, restless cares, that wait on gain;
The noisy 'change—the mart—the loaded quay,
The public street, where the long cavalcade
Impedes the way, and clatter of loud tongues
Puzzles the ear. Scenes such as these ill-suit
My plaintive reed. Such harsh, discordant themes
To poesy were never yet allied.

Ver. 315.] ——————— the poet I injoin
To form no glorious scheme, no great design,

Till free from business he retires alone,
And flies the giddy tumult of the town;
Seeks rural pleasures, and enjoys the glades,
And courts the thoughtful silence of the shades.
Where the fair Dryads haunt their native woods,
With all the orders of the Sylvan gods.
Here, in their soft retreats, the poets lie
Serene ———————————
Fly, ye profane;—the sacred Nine were given
To bless these lower worlds, by bounteous heaven.

VIDA's Art of Poetry.



LA BAGATELLA;

AUGUST, 1800.

OR,

DELINEATIONS OF HOME SCENERY.

PART II.

Jane Taylor del et sculp Colchester

LA BAGATELLA;

OR,

DELINEATIONS OF HOME SCENERY.

THE busy duties of the morning done
Homeward I turn, nor undelighted leave,

Ver. 2.] The desire here expressed for quietude and rural retreat, seems, I think, to be less generally felt than it used to be.

For quiet walks, and daisy-cover'd meads,

Fashion, that most arbitrary of all tyrants, keeps or conducts almost every one now to crouded scenes. The time we pass in cities must be among multitudes; and if we go into the country for relaxation, it must be to the crouded watering-place. For these is the rural retreat deserted, although the hand of taste, as well as the charms of nature, had contributed to render it, in every view, desirable. The author of the Lounger imputes this declining taste for rural scenery, in a great degree, to that early and immature initiation of our youth into life, and into what is termed the world, before they can have tasted and enjoyed the country, which, when once the relish for it is acquired, is capable of affording the most soothing delight to every period of our lives. The sentiment is conveyed under the character of Adrastus, in a letter to the author of the Lounger. "If I am not mistaken," says the amiable writer, "in my opinion of the present race, there are not many friendships among them which I should be solicitous to acquire, or they will be likely to preserve. It is not of their little irregularities or imprudences I complain; I know these must always be expected and pardoned in the young; and there are few of us old people who can recollect our youthful days without having some things of that sort to blush for. No, Mr. Lounger, it is their prudence, their wisdom, their foresight, their policy, I find fault with. They put on the livery of the world so early, and have so few of the weaknesses of feeling or of fancy! To this cause I impute the want of rural sentiment. Most of my young acquaintance are really arrived at that prudent way of estimating things which we used to be diverted with in Hudibras:

For what's the value of a thing,
But as much money as 'twill bring.

The bustling cares of this devoted town.
First the broad square of Finsbury I cross,
Erst a wild moor, now populous and grand.
High on its southern side, in letters big,
The braggart L———n unblushing tells,
To gaping passengers—believe who will,
Th' Aonian nine have found a * temple here.

Their ambition, their love, their friendship, all have this tendency; and their indifference about every object from which some worldly advantage is not to be drawn, is equally observable on the other hand.

On such a disposition, Mr. Lounger, what impression is to be made by rural objects, or rural scenery? The visions which these paint to fancy, or the tender ties they have on remembrance, cannot find room in an imagination, or a heart made callous by selfish and interested indifference."

The LOUNGER, No XCIII.

Ver. 4.] Oui, Lamoignon, je fuis les chagrins de la ville
Et contre eux la campagne est mon unique azile.
Du lieu qui m'y retient veux-tu voir le tableau?
C'est un petit village, ou plutôt un hameau.

BOILEAU. Epitre VI.

O rus, quando ego te aspiciam? quandó que licebit,
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis,
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ?

HOR. Sat. VI. Lib. II.

* Temple of the Muses.

Where rises now the lofty well-built pile,
And where the frequent carriage "stops the way,"
The city's common dunghill late was found.
And here it was the merry mountebank,

Ver. 14.] These fields (Finsbury) were, till of late, the haunt of most motley amusements, and some of not the most innocent nature; among them was every allurement to low gaming, by little fraudulent tricks. It was likewise the great gymnasium of our capital; the resort of wrestlers, boxers, runners, and football players, and every manly recreation. Here the mountebanks set up their stages, and dispensed infallible medicines, for every species of disease, to the gaping gulls who surrounded them. Here too, I lament to say, that Religion set up its stage itinerant, beneath the shade of the trees; and here the pious well-meaning Whitfield long preached so successfully, as to steal from a neighbouring charlatan the greater part of his numerous admirers, in defiance of the eloquence of the doctor, and the witty sallies of his pied attendant.

PENNANT's London.

In the Spectator, N° 505, we find a letter signed Titus Trophonius, which begins thus:

MOORFIELDS, October 4, 1712.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

Having long considered whether there be any trade wanting in this great city, after having surveyed very attentively all kinds of ranks and professions, I do not find, in any quarter of the town, an Oneiro-critic; or, in plain English, an interpreter of dreams. For want of so useful a person, there are several good people, who are very much puzzled in this particular, and dream

The doctor, with his quacks infallible, 15

a whole year together without being ever the wiser for it. I hope I am pretty well qualified for this office, having studied, by candle-light, all the rules of art which have been laid down upon this subject. My great uncle, by my wife's side, was a Scotch Highlander, and second-sighted. I have four fingers and two thumbs upon one hand, and was born on the longest night of the year. My christian and sirname begin and end with the same letters. I am lodged in Moorfields, in a house, that, for these fifty years, has always been tenanted by a conjurer, &c. &c.

It would be no difficult matter to swell the anecdotes of this quarter to an extent too considerable for a note.

Now lean attorney, that his cheese
Ne'er par'd, nor verses took for fees,
And aged proctor, that controuls
The feats of punck in court of Pauls,
Do each with solemn oath agree,
To meet in fields of FINSBURY:
With loins in canvas bow-case ti'd;
Where arrows stick with mickle pride;
With hats pinn'd up, and bow in hand,
All day most fiercely there they stand;
Like ghosts of Adam, Bell, and Chymme;
Sol sets for fear they'll shoot at him.

Sir WILLIAM DAVENANT.

Let but his lordship write some poor lampoon,
He's Horac'd up in doggrel like his own:
Or, if to rant in tragic rage he yields,
False fame cries—Athens; honest truth—Moorfields.

GARTH's Claremont.

And priest, on three-legg'd stool, detain'd the throng.
Onward I press, by dusty clouds assail'd,
From frequent foot of passenger thrown up,
Or chaise, fast-whirling—or quick-trotting horse;
Till hence, nor unreluctantly, I leave,
For back and quiet streets, the public way.
Yon massy gateway, that the sculptor's art,
A venerable pair hath doom'd to guard,
Beckons my steps to where the ponderous pile,
On Tuscan colonnade supported firm,
Within its charitable roof receives
The aged poor. Hither, when worn with care,
Or, by the weight of many a year, press'd down,
To pass his winter-life, the old man comes.
The well-known tinkling of the chapel bell
Across the distant streets, full oft I hear,
Sounding the summons to their midday prayers.
Then forth, in flowing gown, all duly clad,
Out from their quiet cells the suppliants come,
And, by the cool arcades, with sluggard pace,

Ver. 25.] Haberdashers' alms-houses, a large and respectable building, the upper part of which is supported on a handsome Tuscan colonnade.

And tottering step, creep to the house of prayer.
Happy old men! from earth-born cares set free,
And in this still asylum, stealing slow,
Resign'd, yet chearful, to the peaceful grave!
Now Glocester's airy terrace follows nigh,
Whence, on the distant slope, majestic shews,
Old Canonbury's tower, an antient pile,

Ver. 42.] Canonbury-house was made use of as a country residence by the priors of St. Bartholomew. It is supposed to have been in part, if not wholly, rebuilt by William Bolton, who was prior from 1509 to 1532. His device, a bolt and tun, was lately to be seen in some parts of the park wall. Canonbury-house was rented of Sir John Spencer by William Ricthorne, Esq. who died there in 1582; and it was afterwards, for a few years, in the occupation of Sir Arthur Atye, public orator of the university of Oxford, who married his widow. It is probable, that Sir John Spencer came to reside there himself about the year 1599, which date was some time ago to be seen on the ceilings. The charter of incorporation granted to the butcher's company, bearing date 1605, was signed at Canonbury by Lord Chancellor Egerton, who was then on a visit to Sir John Spencer. A daughter of Lord Compton was born there in 1605. From 1627 to 1635, Canonbury-house was rented by the Lord Keeper Coventry. In the Strafford papers is a letter from the Earl of Derby, dated Jan. 29, 1635, from Canonbury-park, where he was staid from St. James's by the greatest snow he ever saw in England. William Fielding, Earl of Denbigh, died at Canonbury-house in 1685. The only part of the old mansion

To various fates assign'd; and where, by turns,
Meanness and grandeur have alternate reign'd.
Religion's zealous sons first rear'd the walls;
And there it was, as chronicles record,
The peaceful hermit lit his lamp, and pray'd,
Thro' the cold midnight hour, and told his beads,
And wept, and chaunted low the vesper-hymn.
To other hands the consecrated pile
Was next transferr'd, and many a noble there,
In feast and banquet, pass'd the summer hours.
Thither, in later days, hath genius fled
From yonder city, to respire, and die.
There the sweet bard of Auburn sat and tun'd

which remains is a lodging-house at the north-west corner of the site, which has a large brick tower, 17 feet square, and 58 feet in height. The tower is let out in apartments, the names of the lodgers being on the doors as in a college stair-case, or that of an inn of court. This place has been the temporary residence of several persons of eminence in the literary world. Samuel Humphreys, who wrote a poem called Canons, and translated "Le Spectacle de la Nature," and other works, died there in January, 1737; Ephraim Chambers, the well-known author of the Cyclopedia, in 1740. Dr. Goldsmith had lodgings there, and the late J. Newbery, Esq. author of several useful books for the amusement of children, and some other works.

Vide LYSON's Environs of London, Vol. II.

The plaintive moanings of his village dirge.
And thence his lonely lamp, thro' the still night,
Athwart the distant space, oft stream'd afar—
Pleas'd, in this antiquate, this silent tower,
A wanderer long, now anchor'd, and at home—
Thro' distant realms to track the traveller's way.
There learned Chambers treasur'd lore for *men*,
And Newbery there his A B Ce's for *babes*.
Not far behind peeps forth the woody hill,
Where Murray late retir'd—his country's pride,

Ver. 64.] Caen-wood, the seat and usual residence of the Earl of Mansfield.

Ver. 65.] William Murray, Earl of Mansfield, was born at Perth in 1705, and died in 1793. At the commencement of the present reign, this great man was shamefully insulted in numerous libels; and in the affair of Mr. Wilkes, he was exposed to the malicious attacks of party and faction. In 1780, when the metropolis was a scene of lawless riot, his lordship's house in Bloomsbury-square was burnt down by the mob, and he escaped with difficulty. A vote of the House of Commons was passed to make him a compensation for his loss, but he generously refused to accept of any reparation. In June, 1788, age and infirmities compelled him to resign his office of Chief Justice, on which occasion he was addressed, in a most respectful letter, by the bar, which was transmitted to him by Mr. Erskine.

This spot is also celebrated as having been the scene of the exhibition of the most admired masks of the learned Jonson.

Tho' oft insulted by her graceless sons.
There, too, the mighty master of his age,
And wonder of his time—great Bacon died,
The honour and the pity of his race.
Far onward now, and where the path-way winds
Bold to the view, stands the once-fam'd abode

See the account of Jonson's masks at Sir William Cornwallis's house at Highgate, 1604.

Ver. 68.] Sir Francis Bacon, after having been for some time declining, owed his death at last to an excess, not unbecoming a philosopher, in pursuing, with more application than his strength would bear, certain experiments, touching the conservation of bodies. He was so suddenly struck in his head and stomach, that he found himself obliged to retire into the Earl of Arundel's house at Highgate, near which he then happened to be. Here he sickened of a fever, attended with a defluxion in his breast; and, after a week's illness, expired on the 9th of April, anno 1626, in the 69th year of his age. Of the last moments of this great man, we have no account. There remains only a letter, the last he ever wrote, addressed to that nobleman, under whose roof he died: in which he compares himself to a celebrated philosopher of antiquity, Pliny the elder; who lost his life by enquiring, with too dangerous a curiosity, into the first great eruption of Vesuvius.

He was buried privately in St. Michael's church, near St. Alban's. The spot that contains his remains, lay obscure and undistinguished, till the gratitude of a private man, formerly his servant, erected a monument to his name and memory.

See MALLET's Life of Bacon.

Of plump lord-mayor, and oft-prais'd civic cheer,
The seat of loyal Whitmore—Good old man!
Who, for his duty to his king, preferr'd
To pass, in prison-house, his lonesome hours.
Far other uses now the mansion claim,
And where the music and the banquet cheer'd,
Now mopes the maniac wretch the livelong day,
And clanks his chain, and weeps, and laughs aloud.
Thro' deep-sunk meadows next my path-way leads,
And lowlands, where, of life, our second staff,

Ver. 73.] Sir George Whitmore was an alderman, and some time lord-mayor of London. He either built or rebuilt the house, which is called Bams, and, in other places, Baulmes, Balmes, or Bawmes. It is now used by the tenant for the reception of insane persons. Sir George Whitmore was a sufferer for his loyalty during the reign of Charles I. having been imprisoned in Crosby-house, together with Sir Kenelm Digby, Sir John Jacob, and Roger Pettiward, Esq. for refusing to contribute money for the service of the parliament *.

At Kingsland stood an ancient hospital, or house of lepers, called "Le Lokes," built in the early part of the 15th century. The chapel is still used as such. The building is very small, and of Gothic architecture.

Ver. 81.] The potatoe. The vast addition which the general stock of aliment gained by the discovery of potatoes in the 16th

* Brit. Mus. printed 1641.

The poor man's stay, is cultur'd and matur'd.
An odious range of brick-clamps to the left
Offends the sense—the poison of our fields;
Whilst, to the right, the high-rais'd public way
Of Haarlem's dyke, the faithful image shews.
Thro' clouds of gather'd dust—resemblance faint
To Afric's marching sands, quickly I press,

century, is of sufficient importance to awaken, at all times, our grateful mention. Captain Hawkins is said to have brought this excellent root from Santa Fè, in New Spain, A. D. 1565. Sir Walter Raleigh, soon after, planted it on his lands in Ireland; but on eating the apple that it produced, which is nauseous and unwholesome, he had nearly consigned the whole crop to destruction. Luckily, the spade discovered the real potatoe, and the root became rapidly a favourite eatable. It continued, however, for a long time, to be thought rather a species of dainty, than provision; nor, till the close of the 18th century, was it supposed capable of shielding the country, where it was fostered, from the attacks of famine.

Ver. 86.] Those who have visited the two situations here alluded to, must be immediately impressed with the similarity. This spot is named by all the drivers on this road, The Bay of Biscay, from the number of different *currents* which meet here: and it is considered, in winter, as the most severe track between London and York.

Ver. 88.] This description may, to some, appear rather hyperbolical. The reader is therefore reminded, that this poem was composed in the summer of the year 1809, one of the hottest

And, 'cross our willow grounds, my walk pursue.
Here, where the spiral corn late feebly sprang,
Now wave the fields, and, to the reapers, yield
The harvest-load. The busy throng are gay,
And, tho' the sultry sun, from every pore,
Chases the big drops down the labourer's cheek,
Still, light of heart, he sings, nor recks the toil.
Whilst, near at hand, his faithful mastiff guards
His thrown-off coat, and thirst-allaying flask.
Faint and oppress'd beneath the fervid beams,
That now o'er all their hottest influence shed,
With gladsome heart I greet the well-known bench,
Where oft, as now, in noon-tide heat I sit,
To rest and fan me by the willow-shade.
Lur'd by thy sweets, full oft, with London friends,
'Twixt dinner-hour and tea, we hither stroll
To toss the new-cut grass, or sit at ease,
Watching the meadow sports, and the sweet air
Inhale, with thousand fragrant flowers embalm'd.

and driest ever known in England; and during which, our public roads were so completely pulverized, that, in midday, on those which were much trafficked, the passenger was obscured in one continued cloud of dust for miles together.

Oft-times too, with my own contracted group,
With Harriet and our little ones, I rove,
In playful mood, this winding path along.
Exulting I behold my darling boy,
My much-lov'd Frederick, o'er his hobby stride,
Calling on brother George his joy to share.
Play on, my child, for play becomes thy years.
Those cherry-pouting lips I would not see
Distorted to relate, in full-mouth'd Greek
Or Latin, what a parrot would become
To ape as well.—Ah! no, I love to hear
Thine infant-tongue and infant-sense accord.
Nature first shews the bud, before the flower;
Thus then—the child, the youth, and last, the man.
Lov'd spot, and welcome alway, whether now,
At sultry noon, or morning's freshen'd hour,
Or when the dewy twilight wraps the scene.

Ver. 123.] "If you would be thoroughly sensible of the beauties of the country, chuse that delicious hour in which the freshness of the dawn seems to renovate all nature: the whole earth is then adorned at the approach of that vivifying planet, which seems to warm in its bosom all the colours which ornament its surface, and chiefly that universal robe, that delightful green, which rests the eye, and seems to give peace to the mind."
D'ERMENONVILLE's Essay on Landscape.

Hither, the penate rites all duly paid,
That holy christian usage hath ordain'd,
At shut of sabbath-eve we oft repair,
To scent the floral sweets these meadows yield—
To mark the thousand tints that stain the west,
As day recedes, or on the kindly bench,
Beside the willow stream, sit down, to list
The neighbouring rooks, that from their airy nests,
In yon tall grove, their ceaseless cawings ply.

Now slowly down the path I wend my way
O'er the rough style—and, by the narrow bridge
That cross the streamlet leads, whence our old tower
Invites me—faithful landmark—to my home.
The close-pent hedge-row, whither the light breeze

Ver. 137.] "It was with a melancholy pleasure that I passed by Zuylestein, in the parish of Leersum, and not far from Wyk. This mansion was, in former days, the occasional residence of King William the Third; and, for about three years, constant habitation of your humble servant.

"As I passed by its venerable turret, rising above the lofty trees, that had so frequently and affectionately *beckoned me home* from every rural excursion, I felt an agreeable, a disagreeable compound sensation, at being at once an intimate acquaintance, and an inadmissible stranger."

The RHINE; or, a Journey from Utrecht to Francfort; chiefly by the Borders of the Rhine, by Dr. Cogan.

That tempers these hot hours, no entrance finds;
And the low humming of the summer fly,
In Fancy's ear, assists the sultry gleam—
This sweltering pathway to my garden-gate
Leads me at length, where joyfully I turn
My little latch, jaded, oppress'd, and faint.
Small is the circuit of my garden's range,

Ver. 145.] C'est là, cher Lamignon, que mon esprit tranquille
Met à profit les jours que la Barque me file.
Ici dans un vallon bornant tous mes desirs,
J'achete à peu de frais de solides plaisirs.
Tantôt, un livre en main, errant dans les priaries,
J'occupe ma raison d'utiles reveries.
Tantôt cherchant la fin d'un vers que je construi,
Je trouve au coin d'un bois le mot qui m'avoit fui.
BOILEAU, Epitre VI.

M. Boileau had a great fondness for his garden, and frequently mentions it in various parts of his works. "N'avez vous," says he, in writing to M. de Maucroix, "N'avez vous point quelque curiosité de voir ma solitude d'Auteuil? Que J'aurois de plaisir à vous y embrasser."

Again, in one of his letters to the celebrated M. Arnauld, "Il y a des Jésuites qui me font l'honneur de m'estimer et que j'estime et honore aussi beaucoup. Ils me viennent voir dans ma solitude d'Auteuil, et ils y sejournent quelquefois. L'echo des murailles de mon jardin a reteni plus d'une fois de nos contestations sur votre sugit, &c. &c."

OEUVRES de Boileau.

But yet the little spot is *mine*—and oft,

The pleasures of a garden, and of rural life, have been described by almost every poet, from Homer to Tasso—from the grotto of Calypso to the palace of Armida. Petrarch has described his Valclusa, Ariosto a paradise, and Marino a cyprus.

"But Milton's memory," says the spirited translator of d'Ermenonville's Essay, "was stored with the riches of all ages, and of all climes: he was himself passionately fond of the country, and the more, as he was more removed from the enjoyment of it *: so that he seems to have written the descriptions of paradise, and the incomparable Allegro and Penseroso, with an extraordinary degree of enthusiasm."

Sannazarius, whose villa near Naples, is described, in his epigrams and other poems, was so fond of the spot, that, when it was demolished by the Imperialists, this event is supposed to have hastened his end.

In Cicero's fine introduction to the second dialogue on Laws, and which begins in the old forest that encompassed his villa near Arpinum, he leads his brother, and his friend Atticus, to a portico, which he had built upon a small island in the river Fibrenus, whose rapid waters, dividing in this place, fell through a rocky channel into the Lins. This larger stream was one of the gentlest and smoothest in Italy; and the whole was surrounded with wild and craggy hills, the forest abovementioned, and groves which he had seen planted in his childhood. He speaks of it with enthusiasm, (as he does, indeed, of every part of this

* An eminent French lawyer, who was confined by his business to Paris, amused himself with collecting, from the classics, all the passages which relate to a country life. His collection was published after his death.

O'er the broad walk, at dawn, or summer eve,

paternal seat) and as a chosen retirement, where he passed some of his happiest hours, in reading, writing, and contemplation."

Sir William Temple had his heart buried under the sun-dial in his garden, opposite to the window where he used to contemplate and admire the glorious works of nature.

The descriptions left us by the amiable Pliny of his own houses and gardens, as well as those of his friends, are highly captivating.

"How stands [a] Comum," says he, in writing to Caninius Rufus, "that favourite scene of yours and mine? What becomes of the pleasant villa, the vernal portico, the shady plane-tree walk, the crystal canal, so agreeably winding along its flowery banks, together with the charming [b] lake below, which serves at once for purposes of use and beauty? What have you to tell me of the firm yet soft gestatio, the sunny bath, the public saloon, the private dining-room, and all the elegant apartments for repose, both at [c] noon and night? Do these possess my friend, and divide his time with pleasing vicissitude? Or do the affairs of the world, as usual, call him frequently from this agreeable retreat? If the scene of your enjoyments lies wholly there, you are happy: if not, you are under the common error of mankind. But leave, my friend, the sordid pursuits of life to others, and

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[a] The city where Pliny was born: it still subsists, and is now called Como, situated upon the lake Larius, or Lago di Como, in the duchy of Milan.

[b] The lake Larius, upon the banks of which this villa was situated.

[c] It was customary among the Romans to sleep in the middle of the day; and they had apartments for that purpose distinct from their bed-chambers.

I love to pace me to and fro, and breathe

devote yourself in this calm and disturbed recess, entirely to pleasures of the studious kind. Let those employ your idle, as well as serious hours; let them be at once your business and your amusement; the subjects of your waking and even sleeping thoughts produce something that shall be really and for ever your own. All your other possessions will pass from one master to another: *this* alone, when once yours, will remain yours for ever."

In a letter to Gallus he says, "You are surprised, it seems, that I am so fond of my Laurentinum; but you will cease to wonder, when I acquaint you with the beauty of the villa, the advantages of its situation, and the extensive prospect of the sea-coast." He then enters into a very minute description of all the apartments of this charming *winter*-villa, which I regret being too long to admit of insertion.

Speaking of this same villa, in a letter to Naso, he says, "My best productions rise at Laurentinum. It is there I cultivate, if not my lands, at least my mind, and employ much of my time in writing. As in other parts of my estates, I can shew you full barns, so here I can entertain you with good store of the literary kind. Let me advise you, then, if you wish for a fertile and never-failing possession, to purchase some spot upon this studious and contemplative coast.

In a letter to Apollinaris, Pliny thus describes the delectable situation of his Tuscan or summer-villa, which was his principal seat. "My house is situated at a great distance from the sea, under one of the Appenine mountains, which, of all others, is most esteemed for the clearness of its air. You could not be more entertained, than by taking a view of the face of this country from the top of one of our neighbouring mountains:

The grateful odour of the new-blown flowers.

you would suppose that not a real, but some imaginary landscape, painted by the most exquisite pencil, lay before you: such an harmonious variety of beautiful objects meets the eye, which way soever it turns. My villa is so advantageously situated, that it commands a full view of all the country round; yet you approach it by so insensible a rise, that you find yourself upon an eminence without perceiving you ascended. Behind, but at a great distance, stand the Appenine mountains. In the calmest days, we are refreshed by the winds that blow from thence, but so spent, as it were, by the long tract of land they travel over, that they are entirely divested of all their strength and violence before they reach us. The exposition of the principal front of the house is full south, and seems to invite the afternoon-sun in summer (but somewhat earlier in winter) into a spacious and well-proportioned portico, consisting of several members, particularly a porch built in the antient manner, &c. &c." At the close of this description, which is exceedingly minute, and protracted to a considerable length, he adds—" I should not have hazarded the imputation of being too minute in this detail, if I had not proposed to lead you into every corner of my house and gardens. I confess I have a very great affection for this villa, which was chiefly built or finished by myself. I prefer my Tuscan villa to those which I possess at [d] Tusculum, [e] Tiber, and [e] Praeneste. Besides the advantages already mentioned, I here enjoy a more profound retirement, as I am at a further distance from the business of the town, and the interruption of

[d] Now called Frescati.

[e] Tivoli, and Palestrina, all of them situated in the Campagna di Roma, and at no great distance from Rome.

Here, too, beneath the trunk of yon old elm,
Frequent I stand to watch the moon-beams play,
As thro' the branches, with light-rustling sound,
The night breeze gently quivers o'er my head.
Now to the temperate meal—for temperate meal
Is all that I require—in haste I turn.
Hence quick I steal me to my favourite haunt,
My library, where oft I fondly call

troublesome avocations. All is calm and composed; circumstances which contribute, no less than its clear air and unclouded sky, to that health of body, and chearfulness of mind, which I particularly enjoy in this place."

Ver. 154.] Pransus non avidè, quantum interpellet inani
Ventre diem durare, domesticus otior.
HOR. Sat. VI. Lib. I.

Ver. 157.] The account given by Montaigne of his library, and the mode of passing his time there, is highly interesting.

"When I am at home," says he, "I often visit my library, from which I at once survey all the operations of my family. It is over the entrance into my house, from whence I have a view under me of my court-yards and garden, and of most of the offices of my house. There I turn over one book, then another, on various subjects, without order, and without design. One while I ruminate, another while I copy and dictate, as I walk to and fro, such whimsies as these my essays. It is in the third story of a tower, of which the first is my chapel, the second a chamber, with its closets, where I often lie to be retired; above

On Fancy's fairy power to cheat the time.

it is a great wardrobe. I there pass away the most of the days of my life, and most of the hours in the day, but am never there at night. At the end of it there is a very neat closet, with pleasant window-lights, and a fire-place.

" The form of my study is round, and has no more level than what is taken up by my table and chair; so that I have a view of all my books, in five rows of shelves, quite round me. It has three noble, and free prospects, and is sixteen paces in diameter. I am not so constantly there in the winter, for my house is perched upon an eminence, as its name imports; and this part of it is most exposed to the wind, which pleases me the better, for not being so easy of access, and a little remote, as well for the benefit of exercise as for being more retired. Miserable is that man, in my opinion, who has no place at home where to be by himself, to entertain himself alone, or to conceal himself from others.

" My commerce with books is sure, and within my power. It accompanies, and is assisting to me wherever I go: it comforts me in old age and solitude; it eases me of the weight of idle time, and delivers me, at any hour, from disagreeable company; and it blunts the edge of pain, if it be not extreme, and has not entire possession of me. To divest myself from an uneasy thought, it is but to run to my books; they presently drive it out of my mind, by turning its attention to them."

MONTAIGNE'S Essays.

In another place, this lively old Gascon, speaking of the power of habit, thus describes the situation of his own chamber: " At home," says he, " I lie in a turret, where every morning and evening a very great bell rings out the Ave Maria, the noise of which shakes the bed under me, and at first I thought it insup-

Where, o'er the slippery paths of poesy,
(If such a name might honour verse of mine)
I sometimes dare, with bold adventurous step,
To rove—happy if now and then a flower

portable; but a little time made it so familiar to me, that I now hear it without offence, and often it does not awaken me."

IBID.

Ver. 158.] The power that fiction hath over the mind, affords an endless variety of refined amusements, always at hand to employ a vacant hour: such amusements are a fine resource in solitude; and, by cheering and sweetening the mind, contribute mightily to social happiness.

LORD KAIMS.

Ibid.] At every season let my ear
Thy solemn whispers, Fancy, hear.
O, warm enthusiastic maid,
Without thy powerful vital aid,
That breathes an energy divine,
That gives a soul to every line,
Ne'er may I strive, with lips profane,
To utter an unhallow'd strain,
Nor dare to touch the sacred string,
But when, with smiles, thou bidst me sing.

ODE to FANCY, by Rev. Jos. Warton.

If you have any curiosity to know in what manner I live, or rather, lose a life, Martial will inform you in one line:

Prandeo, poto, cano, ludo, lego, cæno, quiesco.

Mr. POPE to H. Cromwell, Esq.

At random strown, o'erlook'd by other hands,
I may exulting seize, and call my own.
The deep venetian shades, close-drawn, preserve
A soften'd light of mild and tender green;
Such as in cool alcove, where thick-leav'd boughs
Down-hanging, scarce admit the summer ray.
Here too the mimick forest leads the eye
To silent glens, and hollow wood-walks wild.
But chief, my volumes, rang'd on either hand,
Charm and unchain my fascinated heart.

Ver. 169.] A large wood-scene, painted by Sharpe.

Ver. 172.] The republic of letters knows none of the distance and distinctions which custom has introduced into all others. Here, a decent familiarity is admitted between the greatest and the meanest persons in it. This has often raised a thought in me, which has something wild, and, at the same time, something very agreeable in it, when indulged to any degree. 'Tis in relation to the peculiar happiness of men of letters; in that they can sit down in their closets, and converse with the greatest writers of every age, or any nation; and that, in as much freedom and intimacy, as their nearest friends could ever use toward any of them when living. What an illustrious assembly is there on those shelves! The courts of Augustus, Louis the Fourteenth, or Charles the Second, never beheld such a frequency of great geniuses, as stand round a man in his own private study. How large a happiness is it for a person to have it to say at any

Unchanging friends, who at my bidding come,

time, that he is going to spend the afternoon with the most agreeable and most improving company he will chuse out of all ages. If he is in a gay humour, perhaps with Horace and Anacreon, and Lord Dorset; or, if more solid, either with Plato, Mr. Locke, or Sir Isaac Newton.

PREFACE to Mr. SPENCE's Essay on Pope's Odyssey.

Ver. 173.] I converse, as usual, with none but the dead: they are my old friends, and almost make me long to be with them. You will not wonder therefore that I, who live only in times past, am able to tell you no news of the present. I have drank and sung with Anacreon for the last fortnight, and am now feeding sheep with Theocritus.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST, Letter VIII.

Books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.

All other arts of perpetuating our ideas continue but a short time. Statues can last but a few thousands of years, edifices fewer, and colours still fewer than edifices. Michael Angelo, Fontana and Raphael, will hereafter be what Phidias, Vitruvius and Apelles, are at present; the names of great statuaries, architects and painters, whose works are lost. The several arts are expressed in mouldering materials. Nature sinks under them, and is not able to support the ideas which are impressed upon it.

SPECTATOR, Vol. II. N° 166.

The study of good authors will nourish youth, rejoice old age, embellish prosperity, console and serve as an asylum in adversity, afford us pleasure when at home, embarrass us not

And, at my nod, without a frown, retire.
Silent, yet ever eloquent and free,
The fond companions of my happier hours!
By these, with climes remote or near, I hold

elsewhere; they pass the nights with us, and abandon us not either in our travels, or in the field *.

Ver. 175.] The splendours of royalty, and the trophies of ambition, may elevate the voice of adulation, but they expire with the hero and the monarch. The beneficial influence of literature is felt through successive ages; and they, indeed, are the benefactors of mankind who bestow on posterity their most refined pleasures, and their most useful speculations.

CURIOSITIES of Literature.

Ver. 177.] The account of the manner in which the accomplished Pliny passed his time at his different villas, is no less interesting than are the descriptions he has left us of those favourite scenes.

"In my peaceful retreat at Laurentum," says he, in a letter to Minutius Fundanus, "I neither hear nor speak any thing of which I have occasion to repent. There I live undisturbed by rumour, and free from the anxious solicitudes of hope or fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life! pleasing and honourable repose! More, perhaps, to be desired than employments of any kind! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, best and most retired scene for contemplation, with how many noble thoughts have ye inspired me!

* The oration for the poet Archias.

Communion intimate, with every name

Snatch then, my friend, as I have, the first occasion of leaving the noisy town, with all its frivolous pursuits, and devote your days to study, or even resign them to indolence.

" I have friends," says Petrarch, in one of his letters, " whose society is delightful to me; they are persons of all countries, and of all ages; distinguished in war, in council, and in letters. Some present, in review before me, the events of past ages; others reveal to me the secrets of nature; these teach me how to live, and those how to die: these dispel my melancholy by their mirth, and amuse me by their sallies of wit; and some there are who prepare my soul to suffer every thing, to desire nothing, and to become thoroughly acquainted with itself. As a reward of such great services, they require only a corner of my little house, where they may be safely sheltered from the depredations of their enemies. In fine, I carry them with me into the fields, the silence of which suits them better than the business and tumult of cities."

I am not ashamed to confess, that an enthusiasm, similar to that which warmed the bosom of the old schoolmaster of Pontremali, has often animated my own breast; and I have sometimes lamented, that sensations of this kind have not been more generally operative; for I cannot help observing, that the present is not the period for the bestowment of honours on distinguished genius. All that a great author may hope for now-a-days, is barren praise—we admire his productions, but we make no effort to draw him from the solitude, where he is perishing for lack of bread! It was not thus in other times, and other countries. An animated writer, Mr. D'Israeli, in the preface to his " Essay on the Manners and Genius of the Literary Character," has selected several striking instances of the nume-

And varied character of man, converse.

rous honours which have been formerly paid to the literary character, and which exhibit a remarkable contrast to the indifference of the present age to literary merit.

" I must not dwell," says he, " on the distinctions bestowed on the learned by the Greeks and Romans; their temples, their statues, their games, and fleets dispatched to invite the student; these honours were more numerous and splendid than those of modern ages. I must not detail the magnificent rewards, and the high veneration paid by the Persians, the Turks, the Arabians, the Chinese, &c. The Persian Ferdosi received sacks of gold for his verses; the Arabs have sent ambassadors to congratulate poets on the success of their works; Mahomet took off his mantle to present to an author; and literature in China confers nobility. But I pass this romantic celebrity, to throw a rapid glance on our own Europe. Not to commence more remotely than at the 13th century, when nobles, and even kings, aspired to literature, Authors, of course, were held in the highest estimation. Fauchet and Pasquier inform us, that the learned received magnificent dresses, studs richly caparisoned, and arms resplendent with diamonds and gold. The Floral games at Toulouse were established, and three prizes of golden flowers were reserved for the happy poets. It was in the 14th century that the Italians raised triumphal arches, tombs, and coronations, for distinguished authors. Ravenna erected a marble tomb to the memory of Dante; Cortaldo, a statue to Bouacio; and Petrarch was at once invited by the city of Rome and the court of France, to receive the crown of laurel. Rome was preferred, and there he was publicly crowned with such magnificence of pomp, and ceremonies so splendid and numerous, that his own imagination could not have surpassed the realities of this triumph.

Here distant ages, distant nations rise,
Drawn in the historic page, before my sight.
How oft, as wandering 'mid these treasur'd realms,
I think—Ah! 'tis a melancholy thought,
The checquer'd fates of those that charm me so,
The greater part hence long, long swept away,

Tasso died the evening of his coronation. In the 15th century, Sannazarius received from the Venetians, for six verses, 600 pistoles; and poets were kissed by princesses. Later times have seen a statue raised to the excellent Erasmus. Charles the IXth of France reserved apartments in his palace, and even wrote a poetical epistle to Ronsard; and Baif received a silver image of Minerva from his native city. Charles the Vth, and Francis the Ist, in the 16th century, poured honours, preferments, and gifts, on the learned of their age. Literary merit was the road to promotion; and seignories and abbeys, seats in the state-council, and ambassadorships, were bestowed upon the literary character.

"All this," adds the writer, "is *truth*, but, *at present*, appears much like *fiction!*"

Ver. 185.] In reading a favourite author, this thought has oftentimes oppressed me with the severest melancholy; but why repine, for in a deathless fame they enjoy their ample, their long-wished reward.

> Their vast applause shall reach the starry frame,
> No years, no ages, shall obscure their fame,
> And earth's last ends shall hear their darling name.
>
> VIDA's Art of Poetry.

And number'd now, alas! with common dead!
Where, where, I vainly ask, the mind sublime
The volume gave, that now is press'd by me?
Oh, shew me where he dwelt, and where he died,
That I might go a willing pilgrim there,
For I have wander'd oft, and wander'd far,

'Tis not a pyramid of marble stone,
Tho' high as our ambition;
'Tis not a tomb cut out of brass, which can
Give life to th' ashes of a man,
But verses only; they shall fresh appear,
Whilst there are men to read or hear;
When time shall make the lasting brass decay,
And eat the pyramid away.

COWLEY on the Praise of Poetry.

Ver. 191.] From the life of Petrarch, we have the following anecdote.

A schoolmaster of Pontremoli, old and blind, who knew Petrarch only by fame, was desirous to see him, as he expressed it; and being informed he was at Naples, he set out on foot for that place, supporting himself, at intervals, on his son's shoulders. But he got there too late, for Petrarch was already set out for Rome. The King being acquainted with the motive of the old man's journey, had a mind to see him. He said to him, "If you have so much ambition to behold Petrarch, you must make haste and seek him in Italy, for he will not make a long stay; and if you miss him there, you will be obliged to go to France to satisfy your curiosity." "I must absolutely see him

To bend beneath the shrine where genius lies.

before I die," replied the old man: "I would go and seek him in the farthest east if it were necessary, and death would give me time for so long a journey." The King, admiring his enthusiasm, gave him money to defray his expences.

He went immediately to Rome, and not finding Petrarch there, he came back to Pontremoli; but when he heard he had stopt at Parma, he resolved to set out again and seek him there: to do this he must cross the Appenines. The snows with which these mountains were covered, did not deter him. He thought it necessary to announce himself by some verses, which he sent to Petrarch.

When he arrived at Parma, he was led to Petrarch's house, and as soon as he was near him, he gave himself up to transports. He was lifted up by his son and one of his scholars, that he might embrace a head which, he said, had conceived such noble ideas. He then took the hand of Petrarch and said, "Let me kiss that hand which has written such delightful things, &c."

"PADUA, November, 1793.

Ver. 192.] "On Saturday I made an interesting excursion to Arqua, to visit the tomb and residence of Petrarch. It is a small village, delightfully situated in the neighbourhood of the Eugenean mountains, and not far from the hot-baths of Albano. The residence of the charming poet is now untenanted; it was shewn me by an old woman, who seemed to be perfectly insensible to the value of the treasure of which she kept the key.

"The walls of the rooms were almost covered with the scribblings of those who had visited the retirement of this sweet, this favourite bard. His cat, his wardrobe, his elbow-chair, and a bust of his Laura, are still saved from the grasp

The bard, whose gay or melancholy strain,
'Witches my ear—the heaven-inspir'd sage,
Whose maxims teach me, and whose morals warn.
Ah! whither fled, and why so early swept
Far from the stage, where they perform'd so well.
But chiefly the well-measur'd verse ensnares
My hours of sweet and quiet solitude;
And verse-inspired bards my favourites are;

of time, and shewn to the curious traveller. I wrote my name on the walls of his study, and came away. I then went to the church-yard to visit his tomb, of which I took a slight sketch: the date upon it I observed to be 1374. I next saw the chapel, and enjoyed the luxury of kneeling at that very altar, which had been hallowed by the presence of the tender, the elegant, the accomplished Petrarch."

SKETCHES and OBSERVATIONS made in a Tour through various Parts of Europe. Letter XIII.

Ver. 200.] Whence shoots this sudden flash that gilds the pole?
The God—the God comes rushing on his soul;
Fires with ethereal vigour every part,
Thro' every trembling limb he seems to dart,
Works in each vein, and swells his rising heart.
Deep in his breast the heavenly tumult plays,
And sets his mounting spirit on a blaze.
He quits mortality, he knows no bounds,
But sings inspir'd, in more than human sounds.
Nor from his breast can shake th' immortal load,
But pants and raves, impatient of the God;

For these, methinks, the best beguile my steps

> And rapt beyond himself, admires the force
> That drives him on reluctant to the course.
> Oft in their sleep, inspir'd with rage divine,
> Some bards enjoy the visions of the Nine.
>
> VIDA's Art of Poetry.

The most active principle in our minds is the imagination; and a good poet makes his court perpetually to it. In a word, the poets do, as it were, strew the rough paths of virtue so full of flowers, that we are not sensible of the uneasiness of them; and imagine ourselves in the midst of pleasures, O the most bewitching allurements, at the time we are making progress in the severest duties of life.

TATLER, Vol. III. No 98.

The poets are all of one antient and illustrious family, whose first parent was the God of Genius himself. Amidst those thick clouds which envelope the first ages of the world, reason and history throw some lights on their origin, and the primitive employment of their divine art. Before the invention of letters, all the people of the earth had no other method of transmitting to their descendants the principles of their worship, their religious ceremonies, their laws, and the renowned actions of their sages and heroes, than by poetry; which included all these objects in a kind of hymns that fathers sung to their children, in order to engrave them with indelible strokes in their hearts. History not only informs, that Moses and Miriam, the first authors that are known to mankind, sung, on the borders of the Red Sea, a song of divine praise, to celebrate the deliverance which the Almighty had vouchsafed to the people of Israel, by opening a passage to them through the waters, but it has also

Thro' this drear wilderness of many a thorn.

transmitted to us the song itself, which is at once the most antient monument, and a master-piece of poetic composition.

The Greeks, a people the most ingenious, the most animated, and, in every sense, the most accomplished, but, at the same time, the most ambitious that the world ever produced—the Greeks strove to ravish from the Hebrews the precious gift of poetry, which was vouchsafed them by the supreme Author of all nature, that they might ascribe it to their false deities. According to their ingenious fictions, Apollo became the God of Poetry, and dwelt on the hills of Phocis, Parnassus, and Helicon, whose feet were washed by the waters of Hypocrene, of which each mortal that ever drank, was seized with a sacred delirium. The immortal swans floated on its waves. Apollo was accompanied by the Muses, those nine learned sisters, the daughters of Memory: and he was constantly attended by the Graces. Pegasus, his winged courser, transported him, with a rapid flight, into all the regions of the universe. Happy emblems! by which we, at this day, embellish our poetry, as no one has ever yet been able to invent more brilliant images.

The literary annals of all nations afford vestiges of poetry, from the remotest ages. They are found among the most savage of the antient barbarians, and the most desolate of all the Americans. Nature asserts her rights in every country, and every age. Tacitus mentions the verses and the hymns of the Germans, at the time when that rough people inhabited the woods, and while their manners were yet savage. The first inhabitants of Runnia, and the other northern countries, those of Gaul, Albion, Iberia, Ausonia, and other nations of Europe, had their poetry, as well as the antient people of Asia, and of the known borders of Africa.

Baron BIELFELD's Universal Erudition.

Meek priests of nature! who with incense cull'd
From mountain air, in morning's early time,
'Twixt the soft rains of spring, full oft invite,

Ver. 202.] The appearances of nature, and the occurrences of life, did not satiate his (Milton's) appetite of greatness. To paint things as they are, requires a minute attention, and employs the memory rather than the fancy. Milton's delight was to sport in the regions of possibility; reality was a scene too narrow for his mind. He sent his faculties out upon discovery, into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new modes of existence, and furnish sentiment and action to superior beings, to trace the counsels of hell, or accompany the choirs of heaven.

Dr. JOHNSON's Life of Milton.

Ver. 205.] Here, in perpetual summer's shades
Apollo's prophets sit,
Among the flowers that never fade,
But flourish like their wit.

The poet's paradise this is,
To which but few can come;
The Muse's only bower of bliss,
Their dear Elysium.

Here happy souls, (their blessed bowers,
Free from the rude resort
Of vulgar people) spend the hours
In harmless mirth and sport.

DRAYTON's Description of Elysium.

But vain, their fellow-men, their rites to share.
When, by the tender dawn-light, the young lark
Wakes from his lowly bed, the bard walks forth
To greet the march of day; and when, at eve,
The plaintive nightingale her requiem chaunts,
He lingers fondly by the green-wood side,
Or on the river's banks, to watch the moon
Upon the water play—or in the dell
Alone, by some old abbey, will he sit
'Till by the midnight prayer-bell rous'd he leaps
Forth, as from trance, and joins the holy quire
In strains more sweet, and heart more warm, than theirs.
Ah, who can speak the raptures of the bard
When forth, on his rich fancy, first awakes
The embryo colouring of his fairy forms.
How, holy Milton felt, ah, who shall tell,
When he of Paradise so largely sang,

> Endow'd with all that Nature can bestow,
> The child of Fancy oft in silence bends
> O'er these mixt treasures of his pregnant breast,
> With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
> To frame he knows not what excelling things;
> And win, he knows not what sublime reward
> Of praise and wonder.
>
> AKENSIDE.

In strains that Paradise might love to hear?
Or how great Shakspeare, when, from Nature's hand,
The keys of her exhaustless stores he took?
Or frantic Collins, or diviner Gray,
When, with quick-trembling hand, they seiz'd the lyre?
Not common men were these, nor common track
Did they pursue unto their journey's end.
The low horizon that confines the croud,
With noble daring, oft they stepp'd beyond,

Ver. 231.] When first to man the privilege was given,
To hold by verse an intercourse with heaven,
Unwilling that th' immortal art should lie
Cheap and expos'd to every vulgar eye,
Great Jove, to drive away the grovelling croud
To narrow bounds, confin'd the glorious road
Which more exalted spirits may pursue,
And left it open to the sacred few.

VIDA's Art of Poetry.

Sir Joshua Reynolds has a beautiful thought on this subject, the practice in all great artists of studying and copying nature—"It seems to me," says he, "that there is but one presiding principle, which regulates and gives stability to every art. The works, whether of poets, painters, moralists, or historians, which are built upon general nature, live for ever; while those which depend for their existence on particular customs and habits, a partial view of nature, or the fluctuation of fashion, can only be coeval with that which first raised them from ob-

And trod sublimer ground. With angel-light
Almost endow'd, they, on the future glanc'd,
The present, and the past; and, eagle-ey'd,
From nature cull'd with magic potency
Each varied form—the flower, the shrub, the herb,
From forest wild, or the cool water'd vale,
The tempest and the calm, the western glow,
Morn's blushing tints, and evening's milder gray,

curity. Present time and future may be considered as rivals, and he who solicits the one, must expect to be discountenanced by the other."

IVth Discourse.

Ver. 232.] ——— The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing,
Beneath its native quarry.

AKENSIDE.

Ver. 235.] "Nature," says a learned critic, "is full of wonders; her operations are marvellous; her proportions divine; their effects are striking and powerful; and the finer the genius, the wider the understanding, the more lively are the sensations of her silent beauties."

Ver. 236.] ——— On every part
They trace the bright impressions of his hand:
In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form,
Blooming with rosy smiles.

AKENSIDE.

To grace the scenery they lov'd to paint. 240
Such are the sweets my letter'd bower supplies,

Ver. 241.] The simple and quiet manner in which I have here represented myself as passing my time, may, to some, appear extremely insipid; but I have little taste for noisy pleasures; and I am sorry to confess, that, in my converse with the great and the good of ages that are past, I oftentimes enjoy a much more exquisite entertainment than I can ordinarily meet with among my contemporaries. Vainly do I seek amongst those that surround me for a Cicero, a Horace, or a Pliny. How often do I call to mind the elegant retirements of Tusculum or Laurentinum, and wish to realize the enjoyments they afforded to my favourite Roman, my admired Pliny! How interesting is the account he has left us of the way in which he lived at these villas. "You desire," says he, in a letter to Fuscus, "to know in what manner I dispose of my time, in my summer villa, at Tusculum? I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed; as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to wander at my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind: by these means they are not distracted with a multiplicity of external objects, and see nothing but what the imagination represents to them.

"If I have any composition on my hands, this is the time I choose to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I revise and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or

And such the fairy-treat my shelves afford.

less, as the subject is more or less difficult; and I find my memory able to retain it. About ten or eleven o'clock, (for I do not observe one fixed hour) according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico; and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I happen to be engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this changing of the scene refreshes and enlivens my attention. At my return, I repose myself; then take a walk; and after that, repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, &c. I then walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife, or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and, after supper, we are entertained either with music or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which, I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals imperceptibly away. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the field, that, if I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time too, is allotted to my tenants, though, indeed, not so much of it as they desire: and I return from settling their rustic controversies with a better relish to my studies and more elegant occupations."

It is incredible, what inconveniences are avoided by those who can spend their leisure hours with books and their own thoughts.

But when short truce the exhausted sight requires,
And the rich banquet I awhile resign,
Sweet is the change, when forth, as now, allur'd,
By summer scenes, to my lov'd walks I stray.
To Dorlestone's shaded path I turn me then
Across the brook, and by my favourite bench

" He is truly happy," says an Italian philosopher, " who, content with the satisfaction that arises from learning and retirement, lives, as much as he can, within himself, and neither desires nor aims at any thing beyond such a situation."

STUDY of SACRED LITERATURE.

Ver. 246.] Oft I look'd forth, and oft admir'd,
'Till with the studious volume tir'd,
I sought the open day;
And sure, I cried, the rural gods
Expect me in their green abodes,
And chide my tardy stay.

AKENSIDE.

It was not by vile loitering in ease
That Greece obtain'd the brighter palm of art,
That soft, yet ardent Athens, learn'd to please,
To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart,
In all supreme, complete in every part!
It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart:
For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows;
Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

THOMSON's Castle of Indolence.

Linger, to gaze upon the old gray tower,
By the red glare of setting-sun illum'd.
At such an hour, methinks, how grateful 'tis
Through some old minster's Gothic walls to steal,

Ver. 252.] When I viewed the immense edifices built in honour, and to the glory of Almighty God, I could not avoid reflecting, that they bore a testimony of devotion in our forefathers, which might tacitly strike their irreligious posterity with shame. It is impossible to enter one of these immense edifices without a kind of awe, which, when unattended with superstition, must, we may humbly hope, be acceptable to our Creator.

Lord ORRERY's Travels—Account of Rheims.

It has been constantly observed, that the sight of our Gothic cathedrals excites a variety of pleasing, though grave reflections: we view them, as it were, like public legacies left us through the bounty of our forefathers, for the most sublime purposes: such an idea fills us at once with gratitude and reverence: we enter and examine them with an awful curiosity and satisfaction: all that meets our eye reminds us of something either agreeable or instructive: the various objects wherein the workman or the artist has displayed his dexterity or genius, afford a copious fund of entertainment to those who delight in tracing the rise and progress, or the revival and improvement of arts, and in comparing the taste and notions of former ages with the present.

What greatly adds to the venerableness of these antient structures, is, the recollection of those countless multitudes, that have, by turns, filled them during a succession of centuries.

As on the painted window darts the beam
Along the fret-work arch! With awful step,
And palpitating breast, oft have I trod
The cloister'd court, whilst the low vesper-bell
Across the dome, or o'er the yew-tree walk,
Struck on the ear his sad and solemn chime.
Thence to the near lone village next I pass,
Mean hamlet now, tho' once the chosen seat
Of many a noble, many an honour'd one.
Here rose the mansion of pomp-loving Rowe;

If the admirers of the old Greeks and Romans can experience so much content on treading the same ground where Solon and Numa, Demosthenes and Cicero, Homer and Virgil, Alexander and Cæsar, formerly lived and flourished, with how much more pleasure must we find ourselves on the very spot, where such numbers of our progenitors have so often assembled, where the most sacred and solemn actions of their lives have been performed, where their thoughts have been so frequently taken up with considerations on that posterity, which now occupies the places where they stood, and fixes its contemplations on them, as it were, by way of return! Such reflections naturally occur in those antient and venerable piles.

ANDREWS s Letters on France.

Ver. 259.] Shacklewell.

Ver. 262.] At Shacklewell stood an antient mansion, which belonged formerly to the Herons; and it may be noted as having been the residence of Cecilia, the accomplished daughter of Sir

And here, Cecilia—More's accomplish'd child,
In peaceful stillness pass'd her morn of life,
And many a name beside, of worth and note,
Dwelt here—tho' vainly now, alas! I seek
Some remnant ruin, where the buildings rose—
Such are the ruthless ravages of time—
Such are the changes man is doom'd to feel,
And all that man can boast! The mighty pile
That seem'd the terrors of the storm to brave,
The fair Corinthian porch, that barbarous hands
Would venerate and spare, they knew not why,
To all-devouring years must bow their heads;
And other wanderers, o'er scenes like these,
Will come, as now, like me, to mourn their fall.
For still, the domes once tenanted by greatness,
The spot that virtue chose for her retreat,
The cell, where science, from the world shut out,

Thomas More, who married Giles Heron of Shacklewell. Her husband became involved in the ruin of his father-in-law, and was attainted of high treason *. Shacklewell-house was afterwards, for several generations, the property and residence of the Rowes.

* Harl. MSS. No. 1551.

Withdrew—that world to charm, or to reform,
The huge high castle, whose wide portals op'd
On many a warrior brave, or gallant fair—
These, to the feeling heart, are hallow'd haunts,
Tho' but in ruin seen, and faintly trac'd:
And, until man shall with his fellow man,
To vibrate and to sympathize refrain,
These will charm ever, and the traveller oft
Will lure from other lands to mark the scite
Thus consecrate! Here will the pilgrim feet
Of Fancy's favourite tribe delight to rove
To cull the ivy-branch—or violet pale,
That wildly now the tottering towers o'erspread.
Or should the crumbling ruin yet afford
Some fragment, hence, the curious traveller
Pilfering, will bear the treasure to his home,
To shew to such as never rov'd—or lay—

Ver. 290.] Oft I the traces you have left explore,
Your ashes visit, and your urns adore;
Oft kiss, with lips devout, some mouldering stone,
With ivy's venerable shade o'ergrown;
Those hallow'd ruins better pleas'd to see
Than all the pomp of modern luxury.
An EPISTLE to Mr. Pope, from Rome, 1730,
by Lord Lyttleton.

With sainted bones, and relics rich and rare,
And in old cabinet securely hid,
Close-watch, and but on holidays display.
Then, stranger, when this dreary village-way
Thou travellest o'er, remember, once dwelt here
The duteous daughter of the virtuous More;

Ver. 302.] Sir Thomas More may be considered as peculiarly blessed in his children. Besides this lady Cecilia, he had another daughter, whose name was Margaret, and whose worth and accomplishments obtained the panegyrick both of Addison and Waller: and some account of her life has been given by Ballard, in his Memoirs of Learned Ladies. In an age when the graces of the mind were regarded as an essential object in female education, she was most eminently distinguished by her learning, and particularly by her knowledge of Latin and Greek: but the beauty and force of her filial piety reflect even a superior lustre on this accomplished woman.

Sir Thomas More was beheaded on Tower-hill on the 5th of July, 1535. When brought to the scaffold, it appeared so weak as not to be capable of containing his weight; when, in his usual facetious way, which he retained to the last, he said to the lieutenant of the Tower, who attended him, "Pray, Sir, assist me to get up: as for my coming down, let me shift for myself." Then he kneeled down, and repeated the miserere psalm with great fervour and devotion; and rising up with undaunted firmness, he kissed the executioner, who had begged his forgiveness, and said, "This day you will do me a greater service than ever any man did. Pull up your spirits, and be not afraid to do your duty. Take heed, therefore, not to miss your

And, oh! if pity e'er thy bosom warm'd,
Grudge not the tear her father's fate demands.
Now o'er the fields the chilling night-air comes,
And warns me home. Hence, then, I backward turn,
And by th' embower'd path, for lovers form'd,
'Till gain'd the low green bench, I sit me down,
To watch, at ease, the calm reposing scene.
The distant noises of the city, here,
On th' ear fall faintly, seeming not unlike
To sound of waters from a far-off shore,
Whose low receding murmurings lull the soul.
When the young new-born spring just peeps abroad,

stroke, lest you lose your credit;" for his neck was very short. Then laying his head on the block, he bid the executioner stay till he had put aside his beard; "for that," said he, "never was guilty of treason."

Thus perished, soon after the meridian of a virtuous life, the favourite companion and confidential adviser of a king!

His death was of a piece with his life. There was nothing in it new, forced, or affected. He did not look upon the severing his head from his body as a circumstance that ought to produce any change in the disposition of his mind; and as he died under a fixed and settled hope of immortality, he thought any unusual degree of sorrow and concern improper on such an occasion, as had nothing in it which could deject or terrify him.

Ver. 314.] —— quel plaisir encor, lorsqu'echappe dans l'air
Un rayon du printems vient embellir l'hiver,

And April suns to April showers succeed, 315
Along these shelving banks I love to steal,

Et, tel qu'un doux souris qui naît parmi des larmes,
A la campagne en deuil rend un moment ses charmes!
Qu'on goûte avec transport cette faveur des cieux!
Quel beau jour peut valoir ce rayon precieux,
Qui du moins un moment, console la nature!

L'HOMME des Champs. Chant. 1.

Ver. 316.] It was in this sequestered pathway that I first formed the plan of this poem.

I have been often highly amused in tracing the birth-place of the different offspring of fancy.

" Je me promenois dans mon jardin à Auteüil," says M. Boileau, in the prefatory Discourse to his famous 12th satire, " et revois en marchant à un poëme que je voulois faire contre les mauvois critiques de notre siécle."

OEUVRES de Boileau.

Ibid.] The following is the simple and pensive memoir of Dr. Johnson upon the birth-place of his " Journey to the Western Islands."

" I sat down on a bank," says he, " such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had, indeed, no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air was soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which, by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour

To greet the faint gleams of the noon-day warmth,
Screen'd from the blast that hurries o'er my head,
What time the missel-thrush, with mellow chaunt,

well, I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration.

See Dr. JOHNSON's Journey to the Western Islands, &c.

Ver. 316.] "It was in the ruins of the capitol," says Gibbon, "that I first formed the idea of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." And, in another place, speaking of the completion of this great work, he thus writes; "I have presumed to mark the moment of conception. I shall now commemorate the hour of final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.

See GIBBON's Memoirs of his own Life.

Ver. 319.] We are informed, by Mr. Pennant, that the missel-thrush begins its song, which is very fine, sitting on the summit of a high tree, very early in the spring, often with the

From yon tall elms, to my delighted ear,
Proclaims the glad approach of vernal hours.
Here, too, when sober autumn comes, I walk,

new year, in blowing showery weather, whence the inhabitants of Hampshire call it the storm-cock.

See PENNANT's British Zoology.

Ver. 322.] I think myself happy (says Adrastus) that even, at my advanced period of life, I am still susceptible of the strong impressions that may be drawn from rural contemplation. At this season of autumn, above all others, methinks they are to be enjoyed. Now, in this fading time of the year, when the flush of vegetation, and the glow of maturity is past, when the fields put on a sober, or rather, a saddened appearance, I look on the well-known scenery around my country dwelling, as I would on a friend fallen from the pride of prosperity to a more humble and a more interesting situation. The withering grass that whistles on the unsheltered bank; the fallen leaves strewed over the woodland path; the silence of the almost-naked copse, which not long ago rung with the music of the birds; the flocking of their little tribes that seem mute with the dread of ills to come; the querulous call of the partridge in the bare brown field, and the soft low song of the red-breast from the household shed; this pensive landscape, with these plaintive accompaniments, dimmed by a gray October sky, which we look on with the thoughts of its shortened and still shortening light; all this presses on my bosom a certain still and gentle melancholy, which I would not part with for all the pleasure that mirth could give, for all the luxury that wealth could buy.

You say truly, in one of your late papers, that poetry is almost extinguished among us; it is one of my old-fashioned

And listen to the pattering sallow leaf,
Whose frequent fall the path-way scatters round,

propensities to be fond of poetry, to be delighted with its descriptions, to be affected by its sentiments. I find, in genuine poetry, a sort of opening to the feelings of my mind, to which my own expressions could not give vent; I see, in its descriptions, a picture more lively, and better composed, than my own less distinct and less vivid ideas of the objects around me could furnish.

About this time three years, I had the misfortune to lose a daughter, the last survivor of my family, whom her mother, dying at her birth, left a legacy to my tenderness, who closed a life of the most exemplary goodness, of the most tender filial duty, of the warmest benevolence, of the most exalted piety, by a very gradual, but not unperceived decay. When I think on the returning season of this calamity, when I see the last fading flowers of autumn, which my Harriet used to gather with a sort of sympathetic sadness, and hear the small chirping note of the flocking linnet, which she used to make me observe as the elegy of the year! when I have drawn her picture in the midst of this rural scenery, and then reflect on her many virtues and accomplishments, on her early and unceasing attentions to myself, her gentle and winning manners to every one around her; when I remember her resignation during the progress of her disorder, her unshaken and sublime piety in its latest stages; when these recollections fill my mind, in conjunction with the drooping images of the season, and the sense of my own waning period of life; I feel a mixture of sadness and of composure, of humility and of elevation of spirit, which, I think, a man would ill exchange for any degree of unfeeling prudence, or of worldly wisdom and indifference.

And, as the cold breeze round me waves, I sigh,
A pensive mourner of the dying year.
The short'ning day, and cold autumnal eve,
I fear to meet—and when our every tree,

Ver. 326.] As the following lines from the Abbè de Lille bear so near a resemblance to this passage, I think it necessary to affirm, that the above poem was completed before the performance of the Abbè had fallen into my hands.

Helas! tout cet eclat marque leur décadence;
Tel est le sort commun. Bientôt les aquilons
Des dépouilles des bois vont joncher les vallons;
De moment en moment la feuille sur la terre
En tombant, interrompe le réveur solitaire.
Mais ces ruines même ont pour moi des attraits.
Là, si mon coeur nourrit quelques profonds regrets,
Si quelque souvenir vient rouvrir ma blessure,
J'aime à mêler mon deuil au deuil de la nature.
De ces bois dissechés, de ces rameaux fletris,
Seul, errant, je me plais à fouler les debris.
Ils sont passés les jours d'ivresse et de folie.
Viens, je me livre à toi, douce melancolie!
Viens, non le front chargé des nuages affreux
Dont marche enveloppé le chagrin ténebreux,
Mais l'oeil demi-voilè, mais telle qu'en automne
A travers des vapeurs un jour plus doux rayonne:
Viens, le regard pensif, le front calme, et les yeux
Tout prets à s'humecter de pleurs delicieux.

LES JARDINS. Chant. II.

And every bush, is of its verdure spoil'd,
I shiver o'er the naked—ruin'd scene!
'Tis sweet, whilst bending o'er this plashy stream,
To list, from yonder tower, the village bell.
Consent, ye innovators; O! consent
To spare awhile the venerable house
Where our forefathers oft-times met and pray'd,
And where their sons might yet have met to pray.
Tho' worn th' abutments, and tho' gray the stones,
Yet many a future year, as many a past,
Our village pride, the time-worn tower might show.

Ver. 329.] And sorrowing, I to see the summer flowers,
The lively green, the lusty leas forlorne,
The sturdy trees so shatter'd with the showers,
The fields so fade, that flourisht so beforne,
It taught me wel all earthly thinges be borne
To dye the death, for nought long time may last;
The summer's beauty yieldes to winter's blast.

SACKVILLE'S Introduction to A Mirrour for for Magistrates.

Ver. 334.] Within these few years a new church has been erected at Hackney, and almost the whole of the old one has been pulled down, except the fine Gothic tower, which is also threatened with removal. It is hoped, however, that this humble petition may be of some avail in delaying the sentence of demolition a little longer!

Then spare the pile, for monument 'twill serve,
To tell where many great and noble lie.

Ver. 341.] The parish church (at Hackney) is dedicated to St. Augustine. Within this church are the monuments of Henry Earl of Northumberland, Lady Lucy Latimer, John Nevill, Lord Latimer, Sir Henry Rowe, knt. Dr. David Doulben, bishop of Bangor, &c. &c. Besides which, in the parish register, are many illustrious names, among which the following are the most conspicuous:

Margaret Brooke, daughter of Sir William Brooke, Lord Cobham, baptized June 8, 1564. Lord Cobham was knight of the garter, and employed by Queen Elizabeth as her ambassador to the court of Spain.

"William Tate, gentleman, and Elizabeth, the elder daughter unto the Right Honourable Edward Lord Zouch, being thrise solemlye asked in the church, according to the accustomed manner, were also the 27 daye of December, beinge the feaste daye of St. John the Evangelyste, ioyned together in matrimonie, at the time of divine service, ao. dni. 1597." Lord Zouch had a seat at Hackney, where he amused himself with experimental gardening, and the science of botany, of which he was so great an encourager, that he cultivated a physic-garden in this parish at his own expence, committing the superintendance of it to the celebrated Lobel[a].

"Edward de Vere, Erle of Oxenford, was buried the 6th daye of Julye, anno 1604. The lady Elizabeth, Countys Doweger of Oxenford, was buried the 3d day of Jany. 1613." Edward

[a] Pultney's Anecdotes of Botany in England, Vol. I. p. 98.

For many an honour'd name, and many a saint,

Earl of Oxford was the 17th earl of that antient family: he distinguished himself both as a man of valour and of genius. "In the year 1585, he was at the head of the nobility that embarked with the earl of Leicester for the relief of the states of Holland; and in 1588, joined the fleet, with ships hired at his own expence, to repel the Spanish armada. He was knight of the garter, and sat on the celebrated trials of the queen of Scots, and of the earls of Arundel, Essex, and Southampton [b]." [c] He was an admired poet, and reckoned the best writer of comedy in his time. A few of his poems are extant in a collection called the Paradise of Dainty Devises.

To these may be added the following names, of each of which the register gives a brief account: Sir Thomas Rowe, of Shackelwell; Owen Rowe, Esq. one of the regicides; Sir Allan Percy, K. B. 6th son of Henry, Earl of Northumberland; Sir Dudley North, Lady Trevors, Sir Thomas Trevors, [d] Sir George Vyner, Doctor John Worthington, Lord and Lady Allington, Timothy Hall, Bishop of Oxford, [e] Francis Tyssen, Esq. Sir Francis D'Oliveyra, [f] Dr. Bernard Mandeville, and a long &c.

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[b] Royal and Noble Authors, Vol. 1. p. 143.

[c] Pultenham's Art of Poetry, p. 51.

[d] It was the father of this person who gave the entertainment to Charles the Second, of which mention is made in the Spectator.

[e] The most curious particulars of the splendid funeral of this man may be seen in Mr. Nuvenne's MSS.

[f] Dr. Bernard Mandeville, author of the Fable of the Bees, and other works more ingenious than useful, resided at Hackney, and died there on the 21st January, 1733 *.

* Historical Register.

And many a patriot sage, lies buried there.
How warm (but ah, how vain!) my wishes rise—
As lingering here—of these the history
To turn the page—to mark the way they trod—
Joy with their joys—and with their sorrows grieve!
Ah me! whilst thitherward I turn my sight,

Ver. 348.] With grave descriptions sprinkle here and there
Some grave instructive sentences with care,
That touch on life, some moral good pursue,
And give us virtue in a transient view;
Rules, which the future sire may make his own,
And point the golden precepts to his son.
VIDA's Art of Poetry.

The late Mr. Howard, who may be said, in the truest sense of the word, to have devoted his life to the service of his fellow-creatures, is said to have been born at Clapton in this parish, in an ancient mansion, which he afterwards inherited from his father, and which he sold in the year 1785 to Thomas Smith, Esq. It has since been pulled down*.

In a journal of the year 1654, is a long account of one Hannah, a prophetess of Hackney, who had frequent trances, and used to resort to the chapel at Whitehall, where she put up public prayers for the Protector †.

Katherine Philips, a celebrated writer, known under the name of Orinda, received her education at this place. She died anno 1664 ‡.

* Gent. Mag. June, 1793.

† Several Proceedings of State Affairs, Jan. 12, 1653.

‡ Ballard's Memoirs of Learned Ladies, p. 287.

And weep their destiny, how on my heart
The sad truth rushes, that one common doom
The weak, the strong, the sage, the brave attends!
What boots it now to Percy's gallant heir,

Ver. 351.] A flower that does with opening morn arise,
And, flourishing the day, at evening dies;
A winged eastern blast, just skimming o'er
The ocean's brow, and sinking on the shore;
A fire, whose flames thro' crackling stubble fly;
A meteor shooting from the summer sky;
A bowl adown the bending mountain roll'd;
A bubble breaking, and a fable told;
A noontide shadow, and a midnight dream;
Are emblems, which with semblance apt proclaim
Our earthly course.

PRIOR's Solomon.

Ver. 352.] Weever mentions the tomb of Henry Earl of Northumberland, which had the following inscription: "Here lieth interred Henry Lord Percy, Earle of Northumberland, knight of the most honourable order of the garter, who died in this toun the last of June, 1537, the 29th of Henry VIII." This earl was the person employed, in conjunction with Sir Walter Walsh, to arrest Cardinal Wolsey, at his house at Cawood. In his youthful days, he was a lover of Anne Boleyn, (then one of the maids of honour to Queen Caroline) but withdrew his suit in consequence of the interference of his father, who had been purposely made acquainted with the king's partiality to that lady*. When the inconstant monarch's affection for Anne

* Collins's Peerage, edit. 1768, Vol. v. p. 411.

That once he stood the rival of his king,
And sidelong glances stole from Anna's eyes?
Or what to Rowe, that in prince-seeming state,
Thro' yonder aisles his body slow was borne,
With pomp funereal, 'mid the attending show
Of flamen-bands, of mourners richly rob'd,
Of midnight tapers, and of pressing throngs.
To Oliveyra, what avails it now,
That once he wrote so much, and wrote so well?
In yonder lonely church-yard is he laid,
Scarcely distinguish'd from the common dead.

Boleyn (then his queen) began to decline, a supposed pre-contract with the Earl of Northumberland was made the pretence for a divorce; though the earl, in a letter to Secretary Cromwell, (dated Newington Green, May 13, 1537) denied the existence of any such contract, in the most solemn manner *. "Henry Earl of Northumberland died (as we learn from the account of this funeral in the Herald's College) at his manor of Hackney, now the King's House, between two and three in the morning, on the 29th of June, 1537."

Ver. 363.] It was a sublime idea to deposit the ashes of great men in some beautiful situation, as was the custom of the antients; it recalled the memory of them in a very interesting manner, instead of that repugnance which is produced by dismal

* Collins's Peerage, edit. 1768, Vol. v. p. 413.

No noises now rouse up the listening sense,
Save, at long intervals, the rural bleat
Of distant herd, that in the meadows graze,
Or the soft cooing of the cuckoo bird,
Or that, from yon old tower, our village clock
Strikes on the ear his deep and drowsy chime.
This magic hour invites to fancied themes

burying-grounds; those masses of rottenness and corruption, which, placed in the midst of cities, become infectious to the living.

D'ERMENONVILLE's Essay.

Ver. 370.] The effect of this "twilight hour" is thus beautifully and poetically described by M. D'Ermenonville:

"When the cool evening sheds her soft and delightful tints, and leads on the hours of pleasure and repose, then is the universal reign of sublime harmony. It is at this happy moment that Claude has caught the tender colouring, the enchanting calm, which equally attaches the heart and the eyes; it is then that the fancy wanders with tranquillity over distant scenes. Masses of trees, through which the light penetrates, and under whose foliage winds a pleasant path; long meadows, whose mild verdure is still softened by the transparent shades of the evening; crystal waters, which reflect all the near objects in their pure surface; mellow tints, and distances of blue vapour; the sun, before he leaves the horizon, seems to blend earth and sky; and it is from sky that evening-views receive their greatest beauty. The imagination dwells with delight upon the exquisite variety of soft

Of light ethereal texture—if on earth
The spirit ever holds communion high
With disembodied forms, such hours as these
May the high honour claim.
This waving breeze, this undulating breath
Of tender power, that quivers o'er the leaves,
Seems like to seraph voice that wakes to lull
The dying saint, with whispers bland and kind!

and pleasing colours, which embellishes the clouds and the distant country, in this peaceful hour of enjoyment and contemplation."

There is hardly any thing gives me a more sensible delight, than the enjoyment of a cool, still evening, after the uneasiness of a hot sultry day. Such a one I passed not long ago, which made me rejoice when the hour was come for the sun to set, that I might enjoy the freshness of the evening in my garden, which then affords me the pleasantest hours I pass in the whole four and twenty.

SPECTATOR, Vol. VI. No 425.

Ver. 377.] Frequent, at the middle watch of night,
Or, all day long, in desarts still, are heard,
Now here, now there, now wheeling in mid-sky,
Around, or underneath, aerial sounds,
Sent from angelic harps, and voices join'd;
A happiness bestow'd by us alone,
On contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain.

THOMSON.

Such is the time, and such the hallow'd scenes
That Fancy's offspring prize—where from the throng
Secluded, they, unfetter'd, may converse
With worlds remote, and ages yet to come.

Ver. 382.] One principal characteristic of vice in the present age, is the contempt of fame. Many are the uses of good fame to a generous mind: it extends our existence and example into future ages; continues and propagates virtue, which otherwise would be as short-lived as our frame. It is impossible to conquer that natural desire we have of being remembered; even criminal ambition and avarice, the most selfish of all passions, would wish to leave a name behind them.

GRAY'S Commentary—on his Essay—See Memoirs.

Let us always consider what judgment posterity will pass upon ourselves, and upon our writings.

LONGINUS.

The love of fame, and the desire of being remembered by those who shall come after us, is one of the strongest passions of the human breast; and has been felt and acknowledged by the greatest and best men in all ages.

Pliny, in writing to Caninus, on the natural brevity of human life, remarks, that the more ardent therefore should our endeavours be to lengthen out this short portion of existence, if not by atchievements of glory, (for occasions of that kind are not in our own power) yet, however, by those of literary honour; and since it is not granted us to live long, let us transmit to posterity some memorial that we have at least *lived*. I well know you want not any excitement; but the warmth of my affection inclines me to instigate you in the course you are actu-

Lost to the fleeting now, the brief to-day,

ally pursuing; as I have often been encouraged to proceed in mine by your exhortations. Happy contention! when two friends thus strive who shall animate each other most in their mutual pursuits of immortal fame."

Again, in another letter, speaking of the death of Fannius, he thus writes: "The sons of sensuality, who have no views beyond the present hour, terminate with each day the whole purpose of their existence; but those who look forward to posterity, and endeavour to transmit their names with honour to future generations by useful labours—to such, death is always immature, as it ever snatches them from amidst some unfinished design. Let us then, my friend, while we yet live, exert all our endeavours, that death, whenever it shall arrive, may find as little as possible to destroy."

The lively Horace felt as powerfully as any man the ardent desire of being remembered by posterity.

With what impassioned tones does he, on this subject, break out in the following lines!

Non omnis moriar; multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam: usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens dum Capitolium
Scandet cum tacitâ virgine Pontifex.

ODE XXX. lib. III.

Petrarch, in a letter from the castle of Caprinica to Cardinal Colonna, thus writes:

"I am as tranquil in this house as I would be even in the temple of Peace herself; and as we accustom ourselves to all things, I walk without arms, and without dread, on those hills which are the scenes of war. I hear them sound the charge; I

Or with the meagre praise of fellow-men,

see armed troops engage with one another; the clashing of sounds, and the cries of the combatants, do not prevent my meditating as in my closet, and labouring TO AMUSE POSTERITY!"

Willima of Montagnogout, in one of his satires, says, "Whoever is indifferent to glory has a poor mind. God will be glorified and praised; and man, who is made in his image, should have the same desire."

HISTORY of the TROUBADOURS.

If fame be life (as well we know
That bards and heroes have esteem'd it so)
Thou canst not wholly die. Thy works will shine
To future times, and life in fame be thine.

PARNELL'S Lines to Dr. Swift on his Birth-Day.

Mr. Pope, who, it is well known, ardently coveted that fame which he affected to despise, thus expresses himself to Sir William Trumbull on this subject; "Fame, though it be (as Milton finely calls it) the last infirmity of noble minds, is scarce so strong a temptation as to warrant our loss of time here; it can never make us lie down contentedly on a death-bed, as some of the antients are said to have done with that thought."

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days.

-MILTON'S Lycidas.

These noble sentiments were afterwards dilated or improved by Milton, in his Paradise Regained, B. III. 24.

——— ——— glory the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame

Giv'n with a niggard, or an envious hand, 385

Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross.

On the expression "that last infirmity of noble minds," Mr. Boule observes, that Abbate Grillo, in his letters, has called "Questa sete di fama et gloria, ordinaria infirmita de gli Animi Generosi." Lib. II. p. 110. edit. Ven. 1604. 4to.

See WARTON's Milton.

Ver. 387.] We pass our evenings sometimes with poets and historians, who, it is probable, will be admired by posterity, with hardly any other sensation than we feel from inferior associates.

PREFACE to An Essay on the Manners and Genius of the Literary Character.

The persuasion of a just posterity smoothed the sleepless pillows, and spread a sun-shine in the solitude of Bacon, Montesquieu, and Newton; of Cervantes, Gray, and Milton. Men of genius anticipate their contemporaries, and know they are such, long before the tardy consent of the public.

ESSAY on the Manners and Genius of the Literary Character.

——————————— of his fellow men
He well deserves, who for their evening hours
A blameless joy affords, and his good works,
When in the grave he sleeps, shall still survive.

SOUTHEY.

Steep is the ascent by which we mount to fame; nor is the summit to be gained but by sagacity and toil. Fools are sure to lose their way, and cowards sink beneath the difficulty; the

Disgusted oft, and sour'd, onward they look
To ages less unjust and less unkind.
It was in solitudes and sylvan shades
The antient sages taught and tenanted.

wise and brave alone succeed; persist in their attempt, and never yield to the fatigue.

PHILOLOGICAL ENQUIRIES, Vol. IV. p. 91.

Ver. 389.] The same love of elegance which made the philosophers of Greece attend to their stile, made them attend even to the places where their philosophy was taught.

Plato delivered his lectures in a place shaded with groves, on the banks of the river Ilissus; and which, as it once belonged to a person called Academus, was called after his name, the Academy. Aristotle chose another spot of a similar character, where there were trees and shades, a spot called the Lyceum. Zeno taught in a portico, or colonnade, distinguished from other buildings of that sort (of which the Athenians had many) by the name of the variegated Portico, the walls being decorated with various paintings of Polygnotus and Myro, two capital masters of that transcendant period. Epicurus addressed his hearers in those well-known gardens, called after his own name, the Gardens of Epicurus.

Open air, shade, water, and pleasant walks, seem, above all things, to favour that exercise, the best suited to contemplation, I mean gentle walking, without inducing fatigue. The many agreeable walks in and about Oxford, may teach my own countrymen the truth of this assertion, and best explain how Horace lived, while a student at Athens employed (as he tells us)

——— inter silvas Academi quærere verum.

PHILOLOGICAL ENQUIRIES.

It was in Academus' green retreats
That Socrates his sapient precepts gave,
That Plato's eloquence enchain'd the throng.
And by Ilyssus' far-fam'd laureat stream,
In murmurs soft a-down the thymy vale,
Echo'd the magic of the muse's strain.
'Twas in the hallow'd groves of Attica,
Wisdom and Taste, to their admiring sons,
Unclos'd the wonders of their wide domain.
For woody wilds did Abelard forsake

Adjoining to the Place Louisquinze is one of the noblest walks in Paris, called Le Cours de la Reine. It lies on the borders of the river Seine, and which ever way you turn yourself, it offers either agreeable or magnificent prospects.

It is said that La Fontaine, the famous fabulist, took such peculiar delight in this spot, and another, which is contiguous to it, the Champs Elisses, that when engaged in any composition of length, he would sometimes spend the whole day there in rumination and study.

ANDREWS's Letters on France.

Ver. 399.] The famous Abelard, when he taught at Paris, (about 1130) was followed by thousands, and was considered almost as an oracle in discussing the abstrusest of subjects. At present he is better known for his unfortunate amour with the celebrated Heloise, his disciple, his mistress, and, at length, his wife.

Her ingenuity and learning were celebrated also; and their epistolary correspondence, remarkably curious, is still extant.

The crouded hall, and ever-pressing throng, 400

The religion of the times drove them at length to finish their days in two separate convents. When Abelard died (which happened about the year 1134) his body was carried to Heloise, who buried it in the convent of the Paraclete, where she resided.

Ver. 399.] It is only in solitude, says a writer already quoted, that the most eminent geniuses have been formed. Solitude is the nurse of enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is the parent of genius.

The solitude of a man of letters resembles a scene of antient Greece; a grove becomes sacred, and, in every retired spot, a divinity appears.

He alone experiences the delights of that day which is compressed into a few hours. Where can he indulge, but in solitude, the delicious romances of his soul? And where, but in solitude, can he occupy himself in useful dreams by night; and when the morning rises, fly, without interruption, to his unfinished labours? He finds many secret pleasures, and some glowing anticipations. There is a society in the deepest solitude, to which a polished mind springs with ardour: it embraces a thousand congenial sentiments, and mingles with a thousand exquisite sensations. The solitude of retirement to the frivolous, presents a vast and dreary desert; but to the man of genius, it blooms like the enchanted garden of Armida.

Such is the situation in which the poet of sentiment and nature, amidst the works of his masters, exclaims,

First of your kind, society divine!

THOMSON.

In this stillness of soul, nature seems more beautiful, and more vast. We observe men of genius, in public situations, sighing for this solitude; it is there only they feel their superi-

To his lov'd Vaucluse, Petrarch oft withdrew,

ority, and live in a future age. Cicero was uneasy amidst applauding Rome; and he has distinguished his numerous works by the titles of his various villas, where they were composed. It will not be denied, that Voltaire had talents, and a taste for society; yet he not only withdrew by intervals, but, at one period of his life, passed five years in the most secret seclusion, and perseverance of study. Montesquieu quitted the brilliant circle of Paris for his books, his meditations, and for his immortal works; and for this he was ridiculed by the gay triflers he relinquished. Harrington, to compose his Oceana, severed himself from his friends; and was so wrapt in abstraction, that he was pitied as a lunatic.

ESSAY on the Manners and Genius of the Literary Character.

In another part of the beautiful Essay above quoted, the writer thus remarks on the effects of solitude upon youthful fancy. "The solitude which is sought by the young student, is not borne without repining. To tame the fervid wildness of youth to the strict regularities of study, is a sacrifice which requires all the enthusiasm of the sincerest votary. The academic bower is not without its rainy days. Milton, not apt to vent complaints, appears to have felt this irksome period of life. He employs these expressions in his preface to Smectymnus; "It is but justice not to defraud of due esteem *the wearisome labours and studious watchings*, wherein I have spent, and *tired out*, almost a whole youth."

Ver. 401.] Petrarch was born at Aretzzo, 1304; and at twenty years of age, losing both father and mother, he purchased a very retired, but very agreeable country-house, called Vaucluse,

Where Nature sported in her wildest forms.
In the cool-water'd vale, where footsteps none
Intruded, save the trusty fisherman,
That daily cater'd for his temperate board,
The love-sick hermit tun'd his tender reed,
And to the murmurs of the water-fall,

about five miles east of Avignon, where he spent a good part of every year. Here, in 1327, he commenced an amour with the famous Laura, who lived in the neighbourhood, and whom he has made so celebrated by his poetry.

Vaucluse (Vallis Clausa) is a valley, having on each hand, as you enter, immense cliffs, but closed up, at one of its ends, by a semicircular ridge of them; from which incident it derives its name. Such is the spot where Petrarch spent his time with so much delight, as to say, that this alone was life to him, the rest but a state of punishment.

Ver. 404.] In one of his letters from Vaucluse, Petrarch says, "I often content myself with the brown bread of my old fisherman, and even eat it with pleasure. Figs, raisins, nuts and almonds, these are my delicacies. I am fond of the fish with which this river abounds; it is an entertainment to see them caught, and I sometimes employ myself in spreading the nets.

Ver. 407.] Quel cœur, sans être emu, trouveroit Arethuse,
Alphée, ou le Lignon, toi surtout, toi Vaucluse,
Vaucluse, heureux séjour, qui sans enchantement
Ne peut voir nul poete, et surtout nul amant—
Dans ce cercle de monts qui, recourbant leur chaîne,
Nourissent de leurs eaux ta source souterraine

That constant tumbling from th' o'er-arching cave,
Increas'd the sadness of the solemn scene,

Sous la roche voutée, antre mysterieux,
Où ta nymphe échappant aux regards curieux,
Dans un gouffre sans fond cache sa source obscure.
Combien j'aimois à voir ton eau, qui toujours pure
Tantôt dans son bassin renferme ses trésors,
Tantôt en boillonant s'elève, et de ses bords
Versant parmi des rocs ses vagues blanshissantes,
De cascade en cascade au loin rejaillissantes
Tombe et roule à grand bruit; puis calmant son courroux,
Sur un lit plus égal repand des flots plus doux;
Et sous un ciel d'azur par vingt canaux feconde
Le plus rient vallon qu'eclaire l'oeil du monde!
Mais ces eaux, et beau ceil, ce vallon enchanteur,
Moins que Petrarque et Laure interessoient mon cœuer.
Le voila donc, disois-je, oui, voila cette rive
Que Petrarque charmoit de sa lyre plaintive!
Ici Petrarque à Laure exprimant son amour,
Voyoit naitre trop tard, mourir troptôt le jour.
Retrouverai je encore sur ces rocs solitaires
De leurs chiffres unis les tendres caractères?
Une grotte ecartée avoit frappé mes yeux.
Grotte sombre! dis-moi si tu les vis heureux,
M'ecriois-je! un vieux tronc bordoit-il le rivage?
Laure avoit reposé sous son antique ombrage.
Je redemandois Laure à l'echo du vallon,
Et l'echo n'avoit point oublié ce doux nom.
Partout mes yeux cherchoient, voyoient Pétrarque et Laure,
Et par eux ces beaux lieux s'embellissoient encore.

Oft call'd on Laura from his sylvan cell,
And many a lay, grac'd with her honour'd name,
And that lov'd name the bark of many a tree
Witness'd, by Petrarch's faithful pencil grav'd.
Stranger, if e'er by this low verse allur'd
To these home-paths, and fresh green flowery meads,

Ver. 415.] Through the whole composition of my poem, I have had occasion to feel and lament the unfavourable situation which it attempts to delineate. No mountain torrents, or wild woods, or retired and solitary glen, which are so much the delight of the poet, and which are so well adapted to poetic description—nothing of that character of romantic, so happily painted in the following description of chosen landscape. "Through dark pines, and amphitheatres of rock, the clear stream descends, by different falls, into the quiet vale, and spreading, forms a lake amidst the surrounding cliffs, between whose openings, stupendous mountains are discovered in the distance, the summits of which, covered with eternal snows and ice, and seen from afar, resemble masses of agate and alabaster; by which all the colours of light are reflected as in a prism. The water of celestial blue, and transparent as the clearest crystal, shews all the play of the trout, upon its bed of various-coloured marble. An island rises in the midst of it; the scene of rural pleasures. Diversified by vineyards and meadows, and woods of various growth, this delightful spot affords a multitude of agreeable recesses; the cattle crop the leaves of the strawberry which reddens the banks; and happy couples, whom no interested views united, sit upon the soft grass, surrounded by their children; the light of the pale moon shews the distant undulations of the water;

Slight not the flowery meads, the russet paths,

its glassy surface is divided by a light bark, which brings the daughters of the neighbouring cottage; a white boddice marks their well-proportioned shape; long tresses float upon their shoulders; a little hat of straw, decorated with fresh flowers, makes the only ornament of their smiling countenances; resplendent with health, and serene with innocence, their sonorous voices are only formed by natural harmony; and they have no teachers but the birds; the echoes which never knew the jargon of chromatic music, repeat only light airs of chearfulness, the voice of nature, or the simple sounds of the hautboy.

Quitting the lake, the river pierces into a deep and narrow vale; high mountains, and frowning rocks, seem to separate this retreat from the rest of the universe; on their craggy tops, covered with fir, the rude axe was never heard; white goats bound from rock to rock upon beds of thyme and marjorum; their fearless ease, in this sequestered spot, gives a sort of security to man, and takes off the idea of total solitude, by making him expect to find some peaceful dwelling not far distant. After some rapid falls, occasioned by the rocks, which cross each other, and oppose its passage, the river at length finds, in this narrow vale, a small space, in which its disturbed and foaming water dilates, and flows calmly on. The gently-rising shore is covered with a wood of antient oaks, under whose mysterious shade is spread a carpet of finest moss; the clear stream flowing amongst the twisted roots, and over beds of various-coloured sand, invites to bathe. Wholesome herbs, aromatic plants, and the odoriferous gums of the pine, perfume the air with balsamic vapours, which refresh the lungs. At the end of this grove of oaks, through an orchard, where the trees are loaded with fruit, and interwoven with the vine, appears a cottage. Under the

For they are pleasant—they are dear to me.
What, tho' no mountain-height here lifts its head,
Wood-crown'd—whence the lone ruin'd abbey peeps,
That erst had shelter'd many a sainted maid,
Or where the castle's many-faned towers
Salute the early glimmerings of the morn?
What tho' nor classic Cam, nor Isis here,
Extend their laureat arms, nor proudly lave
Our streams, the haunts of Academus' sons;
Yet ever-bounteous Nature, here the same,
Unfolds her stores. The common grass here scents
As pure as in the unfrequented vale.
The gently rippling stream here runs as clear
As other streams—the birds as sweetly sing
As forest birds, where no one lists to hear.

far-projecting roof are arranged all the simple utensils of the family. If the food is not seasoned with the poisons of the east, the quality of it is excellent, and the taste wholesome and pure.'

In such situations as these, all the force of that analogy is felt, which subsists between physical and moral impressions. Here the mind wanders with pleasure, and indulges those fond reveries which become necessary to such as are open to soft affections, and know the just value of things: we wish to dwell in these scenes for ever, for here we feel all the truth and energy of nature.

D'ERMENONVILLE'S Essay.

And this our homely well, and bubbling brook,
Tho' never honour'd yet by poet's song,
To me more grateful flow than stranger rills,
Whose sides no friend hath trod, and from whose banks
No kindly hand hath cull'd the flower, to say,

Ver. 432.] The attachment to rural objects is like that family-affection which a warm and uncorrupted mind preserves for its relations and early acquaintance. In a town, the lively partiality and predilection for these relations and friends, is weakened or lost in the general intercourse of the multitude around us. In a town, external objects are so common, so unappropriated to ourselves, and are so liable to change and to decay, that we cannot feel any close or permanent connection with them. In the country, we remember them unchanged for a long space of time, and for that space, known and frequented by scarce any but ourselves. Methinks, when I say, my native brook, or my native hill, I talk of friends, of whom the remembrance warms my heart. When the memory of persons we dearly loved, is connected with the view of those objects, they have then a double link to the soul. It were tender enough for me to view some antient trees that form my common evening walk, did I only remember what I was when I first sported under their shade, and what I am when I rest under it now; but it is doubly tender, when I think of those with whom I have walked there; of her, whom, but a few summers ago, I saw beneath those beaches, smiling in health, and beauty, and happiness, her present days lighted up with innocence and mirth, and her future drawn in the flattering colours of fancy and of hope.

LETTER of Adrastus—Lounger, N° 93.

" Remember me!" and (might I dare indulge
A thought so vain) altho' unknown to Fame,
These humble walks now wind their modest course,
All unhistoric—unpoetic ground—
Yet hitherward, in other days, perchance,
Led by this pensive verse, some kindred heart
May heave a sigh for me—some love-lorn youth
May, as across th' old bridge he hangs his head,
To his companion whisper tenderly,
(Whilst I, a listening spirit, hover nigh)
" 'Twas here our village bard was wont to stray,

Ver. 438.] Nous ne nous contentens pas de la vie que nous avons en nous, et en notre propre être: nous voulons vivre dans l'idée des autres d'une vie imaginaire—et nous travaillons incessament à embellir et conservir cet être imaginaire.

La douceur de la gloire est si grande, qu'à quelque chose qu'on l'attache, même à la mort, on l'aime.

Ceux qui ecrivent contre la gloire, veulent avoir la gloire d'avoir bien écrit; et ceux qui le lisent, veulent avoir la gloire de l'avoir lu, et moi qui écris ceci, j'ai peutêtre cette envie; et peutêtre que ceux qui le liront, l'auront aussi.

Pensées de M. Pascal.

Ver. 447.] Hither from noisy crouds I fly;
Here dwells soft ease and peace of mind;
Yet think not Fancy's curious eye
To these deep solitudes confin'd.

VERSES written near Bath, anno 1755.

Muttering his fancies to himself aloud;
Here have I met him at the gray of morn,
When the fresh roseate breath of early spring
Wav'd o'er the daisied meadows, pacing slow
These paths along—and oft, at twilight hour,
On this low bench, by moonlight, did he sit,
Gazing, in pensive mood, on yon old tower.
And here it was, they tell, he wak'd the strain

Ver. 448.] When I goe musing all alone,
Thinking of diverse thinges foreknown:
When I build castles in the ayre,
Voide of sorrow, voide of feare:
Pleasing myselfe with phantasmes sweet,
Methinkes the time runnes very fleet.
All my joys to this are folly, &c.

BURTON's Abstract of Melancholy—or a Dialogue between Pleasure and Pain.

When to myself I act and smile,
With pleasing thoughts the time beguile,
By a brooke side, or wood so greene,
Unheard, unsought for, and unseene;
A thousand pleasures do me blesse, &c.

IBID.

Ver. 455.] As chaunts the woodman, whilst the Dryads weep,
And falling forests feel th' uplifted blow,
As chaunts the shepherd, whilst he tends his sheep,
Or weaves to pliant forms the osier bough.

That now hath hither lur'd our wandering way.
Then pause a moment, comrade, while I grave
('Tis all the tribute we can yield him now!)

To me 'tis given, whom fortune loves to lead
Thro' humbler toils to life's sequester'd bowers;
To me 'tis given to wake th' amusive reed,
And sooth with song the solitary hours.
ELEGY, written at Rome, anno 1756,
by William Whitehead, Esq.

——————————— Here,
Ev'n in the dull, unseen, unseeing dell,
Thy taste contemns, shall Contemplation imp
Her eagle plumes; the poet here shall hold
Sweet converse with the Muse.
MASON's English Garden.

Ver. 458.] But why repine—does life deserve my sigh?
Few will lament my loss when'er I die.
——————— tho' this face be seen no more,
The world will pass as chearful as before;
Bright as before the day-star will appear,
The fields as verdant, and the skies as clear;
Nor stars, nor comets, will my doom declare,
Nor sighs on earth, nor portents in the air;
Unknown and silent will depart my breath,
Nor nature e'er take notice of my death.
Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)
Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise.
Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,
Their praise would crown me, as their precepts mend:

On this, his favourite bench, his lowly name!".

To them may these fond lines my name endear,
Not from the poet, but the friend sincere.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

The morning after my exit, the sun will rise as bright ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green, the world will proceed in its old course, people will laugh as heartily, and marry as fast as they were used to do.

Mr. POPE to Mr. STEELE.

To occupy some place in the recollection of the worthy, and to be sometimes remembered with tenderness when we are gone, is surely, by no means, an unnatural or an unjustifiable desire; it is hoped, therefore, that the wish expressed in these lines will not be imputed solely to a passion so contemptible as vanity. He that has no pretensions to expect his name will be engraven on the column raised by his country, may yet, perhaps, be allowed to anticipate the period when his neighbours and his friends may carve it on the bark of those trees, under whose shade he had often sat

To pore upon the brook that babbled by.

I should, for my own part, set a higher value upon such endearing remembrances, than to be enrolled among the mightiest heroes in story. To occupy a nich with the illustrious friends of peace, of the arts, and of humanity, in the fairy vestibule of the princess * Czartorinsha, would afford me more real pleasure than to have my name coupled with a Cæsar or an Alexander.

* As some of my readers may be strangers to the subject of this allusion, I insert the account given by the princess herself, in the following letter to M. l'Abbè Delille.

MONSIEUR,

Pardonnez, si j'interromps vos loisirs; prenez-vous-en à votre reputation et à vos ouvrages, si une société entiere s'adresse à vous pour remplir son attente. Rassemblés dans un petit hameau, ou nous faisons notre principal séjour, l'amitié, l'inclination, le sang et les convenances nous lient; tout se rassemble pour nous faire espérer que nous ne serons jamais séparés.

Il est tout simple que nous désirions d'embellir notre retraite: le poëme des Jardins nous a eclairés sur la manière; la sensibilité, le souvenir, et la reconnoisance nous guident, et tout le hameau, dans ce moment, y est occupé à élever un monument à tous les auteurs qui ont si souvent rempli nos jours d'instructions, d'attendrissément, et d'agrément. Ils seront marqués, selon leur rang, sur les quatre faces d'une pyramide de marbre: d'un côté, Pope, Milton, Young, Shakspeare, Racine et Rousseau; de l'autre Petrarque, Anacréon, Metastasio, le Tasse et Lafontaine; sur le troisieme, madame de Sévigné, madame Riccoboni, madame de la Fayette, madame Deshoulères et Sappho; sur le quatrieme enfin, Virgile, Gessner, Gressett et l'Abbè Delille, ces quatre faces seront accompagnées d'arbres, d'arbustes et de fleures.

Les roses, le jasmin, le lilas, des paquets de violettes et de pensées, seront du côté des femmes; Petrarque, et Métastase auront le myrthe; le laurier sera pour le Tasse; le saule pleureur, le triste cypres, les ifs accompagneront Shakespear, Young et Racine; pour le quatrieme côté, le hameau choisera ce que les vergers, les bois, les prairies, peuvent offrir de plus agréable; et chaque habitant plantera un arbre ou arbuste, pour éterniser des auteurs qui leur ont donné le goût de la vie champêtre, et par la même contribué à leur bonheur.

Il ne leur manque qu'une inscription pour rendre leur idée, et la faire passer à la postèrité; elle sera gravée au pied du monument; et tout le hameau, d'un seul cri, a decidé que vous en seriez l'auteur. Nous la demandons autant à votre cœur qu' à votre esprit. Cet hommage, simple et vrai, sera bien rendu par l'auteur du poëme des Jardins, par le traducteur de Virgile, et sur tout par un homme sensible

Nous vous prions de croire aux sentimens distingués avec les quels nous sommes, Monsieur, les plus grands admirateurs de vos ouvrages, &c.

To this communication the Abbè de Lille sent the following beautiful and impressive answer.

MADAME,

La lettre que vous m'avéz fait l'honneur de m'ecrire est venue me trouver à Constantinople, ou j'ai accompagné M. le comte de Choiseul-Goussier, ambassadeur de France dans ces mêmes lieux qu'il a parcourus autrefois comme voyageur. Vous connoissez le beau monument qu'il a élevé a l'honneur de la Grèce. Si les arts, rappelés dans leur première patrie, en consacrent un à ceux qui auront préparé leur retour, mon ami aura des droits à une des premières places. Je prévois qu'il laissera dans ce pays un nom illustre dans plus d'un genre.

Pour moi, Madame, avide depuis long-temps de connoitre ce beau pays de la Grèce, j'y ai porté des illusions trop tôt detruites : j'ai cherché les Atheniens dans Athènes ; je ne les y ai point trouvés, et j'ai appris par votre lettre, pleine d'esprit et de graces, qu'ils étoient refugiés parmi les Sarmates. En la lisant, je l'ai crue ecrite par des particulieres aimables et intruits, à qui ungoût naturel et la mediocrité de leur état rendoient agréable le sejour de la campagne ; je l'ai trouvée signée par tout ce que l'Europe a de plus distingué par la naissance, la valeur, l'esprit, et les graces. J'en ai été plus flatté que surpris : votre nom, et votre rang, Madame, vous condamnent à n'avoir point de goûts obscurs ; je le connoissois depuis long-temps pour tout ce qui est simple et beau. Ce Virgile à qui vous destinez dans votre hâmeau une place, qui ajoutera encore à sa gloire, semble avoir dit pour vous :

Les dieux ont quelquefois habité les forêts
Habitant di quoque silvas.

Je suis bien loin de prétendre à la place que vous voulez bien me donner près de lui, dans le charmant projet de votre pyramide. C'est bien assez d'avoir défiguré sa poësie dans mes foibles traductions, sans gâter encore les honneurs que vous lui rendez. Quelques personnes

d'un rang distingué, qui veulant bien aimer mes vers champêtres, ont fait planter dans leur jardin un arbre qu'ils ont nommé de mon nom. Ce monument est le seule qui convienne à la modestie d'une muse des champs; elle se rend justice, quand elle a peur des marbres, et des pyramides: ces honneurs ne sont dûs qu'à ce même Virgile, qui sut, en chantant les forêts, rendre les forêts dignes des consuls; et si vous vous rappelez, Madame, que ces consuls étoient à la fois de grands guerriers et de grands hommes d'etat, l'application de ces vers d'un poëte Latin ne vous sera pas difficile. Je travaille dans ce moment à un poëme sur l'imagination: j'ai taché d'y peindre le pouvoir qu'elle exerce sur l'esprit par les monumens; le votre, Madame, n'y sera pas oublié. Pour prix de mes vers, je ne demande à la divinité que je chante que de me transporter dans votre hameau, de m'associer à vos goûts et à vos entretiens. Si mon nom est quelquefois prononcé dans vos scenes champêtres; si mes vers, rappelés par les objets qu'ils decrivent sont quelquefois répétés dans vos bois, je me croirai trop heureux.

Votre société, unie par les liens du sang, par l'amour des arts, surtout par l'amitié, est la plus amiable confederation qu'ait vue la Pologne. Cette liberté que les héros de votre patrie et de votre maison ont cherchée si courageusement le sabre à la main, vous l'avez trouvée sans frais et sans danger dans la solitude et dans la paix des champs.

Vous me parlez, Madame, de vos souvenirs; d'autres à votre place se rappelleroient l'antiquité d'une noblesse illustre et l'honneur d'appartenir au sang des rois. Vos souvenirs, au lieu d'être ceux de la vanité, sont ceux de l'amitié et de la reconnoissance; celle que vous témoignez pour les auteurs fameux dont la lecture charme votre retraite, est bien juste et digne de vous. Permettez moi seulement, Madame, quelques observations sur la place que vous leur offrez. Ni Racine, ni Gresset ne me paroissent faits pour être placés à côté des poëtes champêtres. Racine merite une place bien supérieure. Gresset, qui a traduit les eclogues de Virgile, paroit n'en avoir pas rendu la belle simplicité: il a peinte avec finesse les ridicules de la ville; mais il sentoit peu les charmes de la campagne.

Pour moi, Madame, ne m'appartient pas assez pour avoir le droit de la céder, ni pour désigner celui qui doit m'y remplacer. C'est à la société d'y nommer; mais, en vous rendant votre bienfait, permittez que je conserve ma reconnoissance.

A l'egard de l'inscription que vous me faites l'honneur de me demander, j'oserai vous observer encore qu'il seroit difficile, pour ne pas dire impossible, d'exprimer, aussi brièvement que le genre l'exige, le caractère d'un aussi grand nombre d'auteurs, tous différens de langues de nations, et de siecles: j'ai taché de la faire simple, precise, dans le style lapidaire et antique; et pour rendre, dans le moindre nombre de mots possible, l'hommage que des personnes illustres offrent, dans une retraite champêtre, aux grands écrivains qui charment leurs loisirs, je crois qu'il suffira de graver sur la pyramide:

Les dieux des champs aux dieux des arts.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

WHATEVER we greatly admire ourselves, we commonly wish to see approved of by others. My own fondness for descriptive poetry, renders me solicitous for a more general suffrage in its favour; and although I cannot flatter myself, that the specimen offered in the preceding pages will tend to weaken [a] prejudices, which some have entertained against it; yet I am confident it is not difficult to produce many examples of the finest composition in this branch of the poetic art.

With this view, and with the hope of compensating, in some degree, for the dullness and insipidity of my own performance,

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[a] Pope was of opinion, that descriptive poetry is a composition as absurd as a feast made up of sauces: and I know many other persons that think meanly of it. I will not presume to say, it is equal either in dignity, or utility, to those compositions that lay open the internal constitution of man, and that imitate characters, manners, and sentiments. I may, however, remind such contemners of it, that, in a sister art, landscape-painting claims the very next rank to history-painting. That Titian thought it no diminution of his genius to spend much of his time in works of the former species; and that if their principles lead them to condemn Thomson, they must also condemn the Georgics of Virgil, and the greatest part of the noblest descriptive poem extant, I mean Lucretius.

ESSAY on the Genius and Writings of Pope.

I have here drawn together a variety of specimens of descriptive poetry, selected from the writings of some of our most eminent poets, and which furnish sufficient evidence how highly they prized, and with what enthusiasm, as well as success, they oftentimes employed themselves on compositions of this character.

The extracts are numerous, and sometimes long; but let not my readers be discouraged, for nothing can exceed the richness and the beauty of the scenery through which I am about to lead them. It will be like wandering over the most luxuriant gardens in the finest part of spring-time, when every flowret is expanding its bloom, and where every breath is sweetened with its odours.

One of the earliest, and certainly, the longest descriptive poem extant, is the Polyolbion of Drayton, a poem, consisting of nearly 12,000 lines, the first part of which was published in the year 1612. It is a topographical description of the rivers, mountains, forests, castles, &c. in this island, intermixed with its remarkable antiquities, rarities, and commodities. There are eighteen songs in this poem, illustrated with the learned notes of Selden; and there are maps before every song, wherein the cities, mountains, forests, rivers, &c. are represented by the figures of men and women. The Alexandrine metre of twelve syllables being now antiquated, it is quoted more for the history than the poetry, and in that respect it is deemed very exact. Although it must be allowed, that it is interwoven with many beautiful episodes, yet, on account of its tedious prolixity and antiquated metre, it is a poem now little regarded but as a work for topographical reference [b].

[b] Being some years ago confined, for several days, by bad weather, in a lone house, I had the courage to read this poem entirely through.

In the year 1645, appeared those two exquisite descriptive poems of Milton, his Allegro and Penseroso. These delightful pieces are, perhaps, the two best descriptive poems that ever were written. Had Milton left no other monuments but Comus, Lycidas, and this matchless pair, yet would they alone be sufficient to render his name immortal. They were, however, little noticed on their publication, and remained for near a century disregarded, or at least scarcely known, whilst his polemical tracts, now only in their titles remembered, made their author's fortune, and spread his fame over Europe.

Of the merits of the Allegro and Penseroso, being now so generally known and acknowledged, any remarks would be superfluous and unnecessary.

The Cooper's Hill of Denham, which was published in 1642, had an opposite fate, and gained such instantaneous and high reputation to its author, as to give rise to an artifice which has frequently attended distinguished excellence; a report was spread that the performance was not his own, but that he had bought it of a vicar for £.40. The same attempt was made to rob Addison of his Cato, and [c] Pope of his Essay on Criticism. Dr.

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[c] Many other instances of a similar nature might be here cited. When Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination first came out, he did not put his name to the poem. One Rolt (author of the Dictionary of Trade and Commerce) went over to Dublin, published an edition of this poem, and put his own name to it. Upon the fame of this he lived for several months, being entertained at the best tables as "the ingenious Mr. Rolt." His conversation, indeed, did not discover much of the fire of a poet; but it was recollected, that both Addison and Thomson were equally dull in mixed societies. Akenside having been informed of this imposition, vindicated his right by publishing the poem with its real author's name. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, of

Johnson considers Cooper's Hill as the work that confers upon its author the rank and dignity of an original writer; and yet further, that in this piece Denham has traced a new scheme of poetry, which was apparently copied by [d] Garth and Pope.

Another similar production to the foregoing, is the Grongar Hill of Dyer, originally written as an irregular ode in a "Mis-

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St. Andrew's, wrote "An Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue," the manuscript of which he sent to Mr. Innes, a clergyman in England, who was his countryman and acquaintance. Innes published it with his own name to it; and before the imposition, obtained considerable promotion, as a reward of his merit. The celebrated Dr. Hugh Blair, and his cousin Mr. George Bannatine, when students in divinity, wrote a poem, entitled, "The Resurrection," copies of which were handed about in manuscript. They were at length very much surprized to see a pompous edition of it in folio, dedicated to the Princess Dowager of Wales, by a Dr. Douglas, as his own. Some years ago, a little novel, entitled "The Man of Feeling," was assumed by Mr. Eccles, a young Irish clergyman, who was afterwards drowned near Bath. He had been at the pains to transcribe the whole book, with blottings, interlineations, and corrections, that it might be shewn to several people as an original. It was, in truth, the production of Mr. Henry Mackenzie, an attorney in the Exchequer at Edinburgh, who is the author of several other ingenious * pieces; but the belief, with regard to Mr. Eccles, became so general, that it was thought necessary for Messrs. Strahan and Cadell to publish an advertisement in the newspapers, contradicting the report, and mentioning that they purchased the copyright of Mr. Mackenzie.

See Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson.

[d] By Garth, in his poem "Claremont;" and by Pope, in his "Windsor Forest."

* The Mirror, Lounger, Julia de Roubigné, &c.

cellany volume of Poems," collected and published by Savage, about the year 1726. Dyer was, what he styles himself, "an itinerant painter;" and after studying under the celebrated Richardson, wandered about South Wales, and the parts adjacent, mingling poetry with painting; and it was in this romantic country that he wrote the beautifully descriptive poem of Grongar Hill. This poem, it has been justly remarked, if he had written nothing else, would have obtained for him the name of a poet, yet it is the smallest proof of his abilities.

The delineations of [e] Grongar Hill are so accurate and [f] close to nature, that it has been styled a landscape painted with words instead of colours; and, perhaps, no writer has more happily

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[e] The very respectable and amiable author of "Observations on the river Wye," has, with his accustomed penetration and judgment in works of taste, pointed out one or two slight defects in this poem. He has remarked, that Dyer's Landscape wants contrast of foreground and distance; that the objects immediately beneath the eye, and those more remote, are marked with equal strength and distinctness; the trees, close at hand, are distinguished by their shapes and hues; and the castle afar off, by ivy creeping on its walls. The passages cited by Mr. Gilpin, it must be allowed, fully justify these remarks; but these are trifling blemishes in a poem which has so many beauties to counterbalance them.

[f] A minute and particular enumeration of circumstances, judiciously selected, is what chiefly discriminates poetry from history, and renders the former, for that reason, a more close and faithful representation of nature than the latter. And if our poets would accustom themselves to contemplate fully every object, before they attempted to describe it, they would not fail of giving their readers more new and more complete images than they generally do.

Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope.

disposed every object, so as to give occasion for some observation on human life, or awaken some moral sentiment.

To those who may have been hitherto deterred by the severe judgment of Dr. Johnson, from the perusal of the writings of Dyer, I would unhesitatingly recommend The Fleece, The Ruins of Rome, and Grongar Hill, as three of the most beautiful poems in our language; and I am happy in having this recommendation so fully supported by the opinions of the elegant and accomplished author of "Literary Hours," who has employed two of his papers in pointing out the beauties of the long-neglected poem of The Fleece.

Akenside has left us many poems of a highly descriptive character. His principal production, "The Pleasures of Imagination," abounds in beauties of this cast; besides which, in some of his smaller pieces, are displayed the vividness of a rich and glowing fancy, in delineating the varied appearances of nature. The following inscriptions will, it is presumed, sufficiently justify these remarks.

I.

FOR A GROTTO.

To me whom, in their lays, the shepherds call
Actea, daughter of the neighbouring stream,
This cave belongs. The fig-tree and the vine,
Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot,
Were plac'd by Glycon. He, with cowslips pale,
Primrose and purple lychnis, deck'd the green
Before my threshold, and my shelving walks
With honeysuckle cover'd. Here, at noon,
Lull'd by the murmur of my rising fount,
I slumber: here my clustering fruits I tend:
Or from the humid flowers, at break of day,

Fresh garlands weave, and chase from all my bounds
Each thing impure and noxious. Enter in,
O stranger, undismay'd. Nor bat nor toad
Here lurks; and if thy breast of blameless thoughts
Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread
My quiet mansion: chiefly if thy name
Wise Pallas, and the immortal muses own.

II.

FOR A STATUE OF CHAUCER AT WOODSTOCK.

Such was old Chaucer. Such the placid mien
Of him who first, with harmony, inform'd
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt
For many a chearful day. These antient walls
Have often heard him, while his legends blithe
He sang; of love, or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life: thro' each estate and age,
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning-hand pourtraying. Though, perchance,
From Blenheim's towers, O stranger, thou art come
Glowing with Churchill's trophies; yet in vain
Didst thou applaud them, if thy breast be cold
To him, this other hero; who, in times
Dark and untaught, began, with charming verse,
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

III.

Whoe'er thou art, whose path in summer lies
Thro' yonder village, turn thee where the grove
Of branching oaks, a rural palace old,

Embosoms. There dwells Albert, generous lord
Of all the harvest round. And onward thence
A low plain chapel fronts the morning light
Fast by a smiling rivulet. Humbly walk,
O stranger, o'er the consecrated ground,
And on that verdant hillock which thou see'st,
Beset with osiers, let thy pious hand
Sprinkle fresh water from the brook, and strew
Sweet-smelling flowers; for there doth Edmund rest.
The learned shepherd, for each rural art
Fam'd, and for songs harmonious, and the woes
Of ill-requited love. The faithless pride
Of fair Matilda sunk him to the grave
In manhood's prime. But soon did righteous Heav'n
With tears, with sharp remorse, and pining care,
Avenge her falsehood. Nor could all the gold
And nuptial pomp, which lur'd her plighted faith
From Edmund to a loftier husband's home,
Relieve her breaking heart, or turn aside
The stroke of Death. Go, traveller; relate
The mournful story. Haply some fair maid
May hold it in remembrance, and be taught,
That riches cannot pay for truth or love.

IV.

FOR A COLUMN IN RUNNY MEAD.

Thou who the verdant plain dost traverse here,
While Thames among his willows from thy view
Retires; O, stranger, stay thee, and the scene
Around contemplate well. This is the place
Where England's antient barons, clad in arms,

And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king
(Then render'd tame) did challenge and secure
The charter of thy freedom. Pass not on
Till thou hast blest their memory, and paid
Those thanks which God appointed the reward
Of public virtue. And if chance thy home
Salute thee with a father's honour'd name,
Go, call thy sons: instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire
Those sacred rites to which themselves were born.

These inscriptions, but more especially the last, have been closely and successfully imitated by Mr. Southey.

Gray esteemed it no degradation of his great powers to employ them in descriptive poesy; and let it be remembered by those who are accustomed to hold in light estimation this species of composition, that he who was acknowledged to be the most learned man of his time, hath left behind him no other memorial of his vast attainments than a few letters, and a g few poems; and of these last, the far greater proportion are of the descriptive class. The Elegy in a Country Church-Yard—On a distant Prospect of Eton College—To Adversity—and The Bard—are

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g Public disputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy, have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting idleness in the world, "ac dulce otium et pœne omni negotio pulchrius."

Mr. West to Mr. Gray. Memoirs of Gray.

Mr. West, in the above, expressed the sentiment and taste of the friend whom he was addressing.

all of this kind. His little Ode to Spring is peculiarly entitled to this character. The two first stanzas are specimens of beautiful painting.

Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd hours,
Fair Venus' train appear,
Disclose the long-expecting hours,
And wake the purple year!
The attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring:
While whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky,
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader—browner shade;
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech,
O'er canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink,
With me the Muse shall sit and think,
(At ease reclin'd in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the croud,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great! [h]

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[h] This beautiful little ode was written in June, 1742, at Stoke, near Windsor. The scene of The Elegy in a country church-yard.

Immediately that it was finished, Gray sent it in a letter to his beloved friend West, then in a deep consumption, and who was dead before it reached Hertfordshire, and the letter was returned to Mr. Gray unopened. On reading this affecting anecdote, I have ever since

The Seasons of Thomson, and the Windsor Forest of Pope, are so generally known and admired, that any particular remarks on these poems would appear almost superfluous. Thomson, who undertook to paint from nature, and to delineate the various objects of rural scenery and rustic occupation, was well qualified for the task, having oftentimes retired, during many weeks together, into the seclusions of the [1] country, to familiarize his

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felt the most pathetic and tender interest in this ode. "It will also (to use the language of his biographer) throw a melancholy grace on the Ode of a distant Prospect of Eton, and in that to Adversity; both of them written the August following. For as both these poems abound with pathos, those who have feeling hearts, will feel this excellence the more strongly, when they know the cause from whence it arose; and the unfeeling will, perhaps, learn to respect what they cannot taste, when they are prevented from imputing to a splenetic melancholy what in fact sprang from the most benevolent of all sensations."

It is supposed, that the Elegy in a Country Church-Yard was begun, if not concluded, about this time also.

Vide Mason's Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Gray.

[1] No poet before Thomson had thought of *studying* in fields and woods. It is said of that admirable designer of wild animals, M. Ridinger, of Vienna, that he has frequently passed whole nights in the depths of forests for the purpose of viewing the fierce and solitary inhabitants in their native abodes, with all the actions and manners of their savage state. It cannot be doubted, that Thomson must have bestowed equal attention and diligence in examining those parts of animated nature which occupy so distinguished a place in his paintings.

Aikin's Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry.

mind with those beautiful appearances which he has so happily and so accurately described.

Although descriptive poesy was, by no means, the talent or delight of Pope, yet there are, in his [k] Windsor Forest, many beautiful and brilliant passages.

The Edge Hill of Jago, and the descriptive and elegiac poems of the tender bard of Amwell, are the pieces which I shall

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[k] The design of Windsor Forest (says Dr. Johnson) is evidently derived from Cooper's Hill, with some attention to Waller's Poem on the Park; but Pope cannot be denied to excel his masters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging description, narrative, and morality.

LIFE of POPE.

The passage wherein he speaks of the poets who lived and died near this spot, is in a high strain of enthusiasm.

I seem thro' consecrated walks to rove;
I hear soft music die along the grove;
Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
By God-like poets venerable made.

The following exclamation of Thames is much admired for the picturesque appropriation of the epithets.

And *feather'd* people crowd my wealthy side;
And *naked* youths, and *painted* chiefs, admire
Our speech, our colour, and our strange *attire*.

Merits of the same kind have also recommended the succeeding lines to the applauses of a celebrated critic.

Till the freed Indians in their natives groves
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves;
Peru once more a race of kings behold,
And other Mexico's be roof'd with gold.

next proceed to notice. Indeed, these are the only poems that I have met with which appear to me to bear any near analogy to that which I have ventured to submit to the public eye. Mr. Jago, however, had the good fortune, in Edge Hill, to fall on happier scenes, and more interesting objects, than it has been my lot to meet with. His poem has, nevertheless, not obtained any considerable general notice or distinction, although it has been, by [1] some, ranked with the Cooper's Hill of Denham, and the Grongar Hill of Dyer, and similar compositions of other writers, who have proved their powers in loco-descriptive poetry. I cannot, for my own part, consider this poem either as one of the most spirited or happiest productions of the muse; and its locality must also render it still less interesting to those who are unacquainted with the situations and scenes it describes. The following passages will, however, I am sure, be deemed beautiful specimens of natural painting.

Lo! where but late the flocks and heifers graz'd,
Or yellow harvests wav'd, now thro' the vale,

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[1] Besides the respectable testimonials of Shenstone and Graves, &c. to the merits of Jago, his moral and intellectual character have been accurately delineated by his friend Mr. Hylton.

The first production that introduced Mr. Jago to notice, was his Elegy on the Blackbirds, published by Dr. Hawksworth, in the Adventurer, in 1752, and attributed to West.

The following pathetic stanza will, I doubt not, recal this poem to the recollection of every reader.

At him the gunner took his aim,
Too sure the volley'd thunder flew!
Oh—had he chose some other game,
Or shot—as he was wont to do!

Or o'er the plain, or round the slaunting hill,
A glittering path attracts the gazer's eye,
Where sooty barks pursue their liquid track
Thro' lawns, and woods, and villages; remote
From public haunt, which wonder as they pass
The channell'd road still onward moves, and still
With level course the flood attendant leads.
Hills, dales oppose in vain, a thousand hands
Now thro' the mountain's side a passage ope,
Now with stupendous arches bridge the vale,
Now over paths and rivers urge their way
Aloft in air.

Speaking of the inroads of disease and death, in the retired as well as the crouded scene, the poet thus pathetically paints their mournful ravages.

Thro' populous streets the never-ceasing bell
Proclaims, with solemn sound, the parting breath;
Nor seldom from the village tower is heard
The mournful knell. Alike the grassy ridge,
With ozier bound, and vaulted catacomb,
His spoils enclose. Alike the simple stone,
And mausoleum proud, his power attest
In wretched doggerel, or elaborate verse.

The following passage happily describes one of those burrows, or heaps, supposed to be raised over the slain after a battle, of which so many are still remaining in the neighbourhood where this poem was written.

Yon grass-green mount, where waves the planted pine,
And whispers to the winds the mournful tale,
Contain them in its monumental mould;

A slaughter'd crew promiscuous lodg'd below!
Still as the plowman breaks the clotted glebe
He ever and anon some trophy finds,
The relicks of the war: or rusty spear,
Or canker'd ball: but from sepulchral soil
Cautious he turns aside the shining steel,
Lest haply, at its touch, uncover'd bones
Should start to view, and blast his rural toil!

Of the general character of the poetry of Scott, I need say but little, a most competent [m] judge having already pronounced

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[m] Mr. Hoole, the celebrated translator of Tasso and Ariosto.

"The greater part of Mr. Scott's poems," says Mr. Hoole, "are turned on rural imagery; in which it will be found, that his principal merit is novelty in description, and a laudable endeavour to introduce an occasional simplicity of style, perhaps too much rejected by the present fastidious readers of poetry. He was certainly no copyist of the thoughts of others; for, living in the country, and being a close and accurate observer, he painted what he saw.

"He cultivated the knowledge of natural history and botany, which enabled him to preserve the truth of nature with many discriminating touches, perhaps not excelled by any descriptive poet since the days of Thomson.

"His Amwell, a descriptive poem, is written in blank verse, the genius of which he professed to have particularly studied; and, I think, he exhibits a specimen of great strength and harmony in that metre.

"Scott has availed himself of every circumstance that could, with propriety, be introduced to decorate his poem; and though it will not raise, in the mind of a stranger, any strong idea of the place meant to be described, yet it will always be perused with delight by poetical lovers of rural imagery.

so fully on its merits. Amwell is, perhaps, not one of his best productions, although it cannot be denied this contains many beautifully descriptive passages, among which may be classed the following.

——————— " Maria, come!
The country calls us forth; blithe Summer's hand

" Perhaps it must be granted, that his first avowed poetical production, entitled Elegies, Moral and Descriptive, has not been excelled by any of his subsequent works, whether we consider the liveliness of the painting, the harmony of the verse, or the amiable strain of benevolence and piety that runs through the whole."

But among all the productions of this philanthropic writer, there is not one that has given me more pleasure than the following little ode. It is truly British, and truly humane.

I hate that drum's discordant sound,
Parading round, and round, and round;
To thoughtless youth it pleasure yields,
And lures from cities, and from fields,
To sell their liberty for charms
Of tawdry lace, and glittering arms;
And when Ambition's voice commands,
To march, and fight, and fall in foreign lands.

I hate that drum's discordant sound,
Parading round, and round, and round:
To me it talks of ravag'd plains,
And burning towns, and ruin'd swains,
And mangled limbs, and dying groans,
And widow's tears, and orphan's moans;
And all that Misery's hand bestows
To fill the catalogue of human woes.

Sheds sweetest flowers, and Morning's brightest smile
Illumines earth and air; Maria, come!
By winding pathways thro' the waving corn,
We reach the airy point that prospect yields,
Not vast and awful, but confin'd and fair;
Not the black mountain, and the foamy main;
Nor the throng'd city, and the busy port;
But pleasant interchange of soft ascent,
And level plain, and growth of shady wood,
And twining course of rivers clear, and sight
Of rural towns, and rural cots, whose roofs
Rise scattering round.

Far tow'rds the west, by Lee's Cerulean stream,
Hertford's gray towers[n] ascend; the rude remain
Of high antiquity, from waste escap'd
Of envious time and violence of war.

——— "Elysian scene!
At evening often, while the setting sun
On the green summit of thy eastern groves
Pour'd full his yellow radiance; while the voice
Of Zephyr whispering 'midst the rustling leaves,
The sound of water murmuring thro' the sedge,
The turtle's plaintive call, and music soft
Of distant bells, whose ever-varying notes
In slow, sad measure mov'd, combin'd to soothe

[n] In the beginning of the Heptarchy, the town of Hertford was accounted one of the principal cities of the East Saxons, where the kings of that province often kept their courts, and a parliamentary council, or national synod, was held there Sept. 24, 673.
CHAUNCEY's History of Hertfordshire, p. 237.

The soul to sweet solemnity of thought;
Beneath thy branchy bowers of thickest gloom,
Much on th' imperfect state of man I've mus'd:
How Pain o'er half his hours her iron reign
Ruthless extends; how Pleasure from the path
Of Innocence allures his steps; how Hope
Directs his eye to distant joy, that flies
His fond pursuit; how Fear his shuddering heart
Alarms with fancied ill; how Doubt and Care
Perplex his thought.

To the above quotations the following lines will furnish a pleasing and lively contrast.

——————— "Beside her door
The cottage matron whirls her circling wheel,
And jocund chaunts her lay. The cottage maid
Feeds from her loaded lap her mingled train
Of clamourous hungry fowls; or o'er the stile,
Leaning with downcast look, the artless tale
Of evening courtship hears. The sportive troop
Of cottage children, on the grassy waste,
Mix in rude gambols on the bounding ball,
Circle from hand to hand, or rustic notes
Wake on their pipes of jointed reed: while near
The careful shepherd's frequent-falling strokes
Fix on the fallow lea his hurdled fold."

o To these extracts I would willingly add the interesting character given of the vicar of Amwell, and some affecting lines

o About this time the celebrated Mr. Dodsley published a descriptive poem, entitled "Agriculture," which was but coldly received.

at the close of the poem, but though they merit a place in this selection, I fear I may be considered to have trespassed by the

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and the original design never completed. Although some pleasing passages might be selected from it, yet it must be considered, upon the whole, as a prosaic and spiritless performance. The character of Patty, which is reckoned one of its chief beauties, is too artificial and laboured.

The following description of the gardens and philosophy of Epicurus, which closes the second canto, is the only passage with which I have found myself particularly pleased.

Hail, sweet Retirement! Wisdom's peaceful seat!
Where lifted from the crowd, and calmly plac'd
Beyond the deafening roar of human strife,
Th' * Athenian sage his happy followers taught,
That pleasure springs from virtue. Gracious Heaven!
How worthy thy divine beneficence
This fair establish'd truth! Ye blissful bowers,
Ye rural groves, whose echoes caught his lore,
O! might I hear, thro' Time's long tract convey'd,
The moral lessons taught beneath your shades!
And lo! transported to the sacred scenes,
Such the divine enchantment of the Muse,
I see the sage—I hear, I hear his voice!
" The end of life is happiness, the means
" That end to gain, fair Virtue gives alone.
" From the vain phantoms, or delusive fear,
" Or strong Desire's intemp'rance, spring the woes

* Epicurus, who, on account of teaching in his garden, was called the Garden-Philosopher; and his disciples, the Philosophers of the Garden.

length of the quotations already given [p].

The next whom I shall bring forward in this enumeration of

" Which human life embitter. Oh! my sons,
" From Error's darkening clouds, from groundless fear
" Enfeebling all her powers, with early skill
" Clear the bewilder'd mind. Let Fortitude
" Establish in your breasts her stedfast theme;
" So shall the stings of Evil fix no wound;
" Nor dread of poverty, nor pain, nor grief,
" Nor life's disasters, nor the fear of death,
" Shake the just purpose of your steady souls.
" And see, my friends, this garden's little bound,
" So small the wants of nature, well supplies
" Our board with plenty; roots, or wholesome pulse,
" Or herbs, or flavor'd fruits; and, from the stream,
" The hand of Moderation fills a cup,
" To thirst delicious. Hence nor fevers rise,
" Nor surfeits, nor the boiling blood, inflam'd
" With turbid violence, the veins distend."

[p] The reader will, I hope, be disposed to pardon so particular a notice of the poet of Amwell, when told, that amidst the scenes described in that poem, I passed several of my early years, having received a part of my education at Ware, a place therein frequently named and noticed. On such a character as the bard of Amwell, it is grateful to dilate. If any be disposed to question his genius, or his talents, let them call to mind the qualities of his associates. He who numbered, among his intimates, many of the most illustrious characters of the age, could surely be no ordinary man.

The friend and associate of Sir William Jones, of Dr. Hawkesworth, Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Macauley, Dr. Beattie, of Mr. Boswell, Potter, Hoole, Mickle, &c. &c. all of whom visited and loved him; surely, I repeat, such an one must have possessed virtues and attractions above the common level of mankind.

descriptive poets, is the name of Warton—a name that will be always remembered with enthusiasm and delight by the friends of [q] literature and of taste [r].

But although his merits as a [s] critic, an [t] historian, a [u] biographer, and as public [x] laureat, have been generally acknowledged, yet his super-eminent talents for descriptive poesy appear to me to have been overlooked. As, however, I consider him in this character to hold an almost equal rank with Spenser, Milton, and Gray, in whose school he was an eminent disciple, and whose manner he most successfully caught, I shall employ a few of the succeeding pages in making such extracts from various of his descriptive poems as may restore him to the elevated distinction of the poet and the painter of nature.

My quotations will, I am aware, be more numerous than those given from any author previously named; but they will be so only because Warton was a writer who has exerted his fine fancy

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[q] Dr. Johnson usually distinguished the two Wartons by the title of the learned brothers.

[r] For still while taste, or, she can honour claim,
Each age shall venerate her Warton's name.
THOMSON'S Sonnet on the Death of Warton.

[s] See Warton's Observations on Spenser—edition of Theocritus—and Notes on Milton—and his Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems attributed to Rowley.

[t] The "History of English Poetry" is generally considered as the chef d'œuvre of Warton. The plan of such a work had been agitated both by Pope and Gray, but never executed.

[u] Lives of Dr. Bathurst and Sir Thomas Pope.

[x] Warton was made poet laureat on the death of Whitehead, in the year 1785.

and powers of description more largely than almost any of the writers I have enumerated. His imagination was a rich storehouse of beauties, from which he appears, on all occasions, to have drawn with the happiest success.

In his celebrated poem, the Triumph of Isis, published as an answer to Mr. Mason's Elegy, are many beautiful passages. The commencement exhibits no unfavourable specimen of his descriptive talents.

" On closing flowers when genial gales diffuse
The fragrant tribute of refreshing dews;
When chaunts the milk-maid at her balmy pail,
And weary reapers whistle o'er the vale;
Charm'd by the murmurs of the quivering shade,
O'er Isis' willow-fringed banks I stray'd;
And calmly musing thro' the twilight-way,
In pensive mood I fram'd the Doric lay,
When lo! from opening clouds a golden gleam
Pour'd sudden splendours o'er the shadowy stream,
And from the wave arose its guardian queen,
Known by her sweeping stole of glossy green;
While in the coral crown that bound her brow,
Was wove the Delphic laurel's verdant bough."

On a distant view of Oxford, he breaks forth in the following expressive lines:

" Ye fretted pinnacles, ye fanes sublime,
Ye tow'rs that wear the mossy veil of time!
Ye massy piles of old munificence,
At once the pride of learning and defence;
Ye cloisters pale that lengthening to the sight,
To contemplation, step by step, invite;

Ye high-arch'd walls, where oft the whispers clear
Of harps unseen have swept the poet's ear;
Ye temples dim, where pious duty pays
Her holy hymns of ever-echoing praise;
Lo! your lov'd Isis from the bordering vale,
With all a mother's fondness bids you hail!"

In the year 1745, when only seventeen years of age, he wrote the Pleasures of Melancholy, a pleasing Miltonic poem, abounding with bold metaphors and highly-coloured pictures. It is quite in the style and manner of the Il Penseroso of Milton, and yields nothing in richness of fancy and description to that admired effusion of the elder bard. The following extracts will convince the reader of the justice of these remarks.

"Beneath yon ruin'd abbey's moss-grown piles,
Oft let me sit at midnight hour of eve,
Where thro' some western window the pale moon
Pours her long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
While sullen sacred silence reigns around,
Save the lone screech-owl's note, who builds his bow'r
Amid the mould'ring caverns dark and deep,
Or the calm breeze that rustles in the leaves
Of flaunting ivy, that with mantle green
Invests some wasted tow'r. Or let me tread
Its neighbouring walk of pines, where mus'd of old
The cloister'd brothers: thro' the gloomy void
That far extends beneath their ample arch.
As on I pace, Religion's horror wraps
My soul in dread repose. But when the world
Is clad in Midnight's raven-colour'd robe,
'Mid hollow charnels let me watch the flame
Of taper dim, shedding a livid glare

O'er the wan heaps, while airy voices talk
Along the glimmering walls; or ghostly shape,
At distance seen, invites, with beckoning hand,
My lonesome steps, thro' the far-winding vaults."

How awful and striking is his description of midnight in the following lines:

" Nor undelightful is the solemn noon
Of night, when haply wakeful from my couch
I start: lo, all is motionless around!
Roars not the rushing wind; the sons of men,
And every beast in mute oblivion lie:
All nature's hush'd in silence and in sleep.
O then how fearful is it to reflect,
That thro' the still globe's awful solitude,
No being wakes but me, till stealing sleep
My drooping temples bathes in opiate dews.
Nor then let dreams, of wanton folly born,
My senses lead thro' flow'ry paths of joy;
But let the sacred genius of the night
Such mystic visions send as Spenser saw,
When thro' bewildering Fancy's magic maze
To the fell house of Busyrane, he led
Th' unshaken Britomart; or Milton knew,
When in abstracted thought he first conceiv'd
All heav'n in tumult, and the seraphim
Come towering, arm'd in adamant and gold."

The verses which immediately succeed the foregoing, exhibit an agreeable contrariety of sentiments and scenery.

" Let others love soft summer's evening smiles,
As listening to the distant water-fall,

They mark the blushes of the streaky west;
I choose the pale December's foggy glooms.
Then with the sullen shades of evening close,
Where thro' the room a blindly glimmering-gleam
The dying embers scatter, far remote
From Mirth's mad shouts, that thro' th' illumin'd roof
Resound with festive echo, let me sit,
Blest with the lowly cricket's drowsy dirge."

The impression of night on the wanderer is thus finely described:

"What, tho' thy stay the pilgrim curseth oft,
As all benighted in Arabian wastes,
He hears the wilderness around him howl
With roaming monsters, while on his hoar head
The black descending tempest ceaseless beats;
Yet more delightful to my pensive mind
Is thy return, than blooming Morn's approach,
Ev'n then in youthful pride of opening May,
When from the portals of the saffron east
She sheds fresh roses and ambrosial dews."

The kind of morning that could alone be welcomed by Melancholy, is thus happily sketched in the lines that next follow:

"Yet not ungrateful is the Morn's approach
When dropping wet she comes, and clad in clouds,
While thro' the damp air scowls the low'ring south,
Blackening the landscape's face, that grove and hill,
In formless vapours, undistinguish'd swim."

The indulgence of Melancholy, by attending the cathedral service during winter evenings, is no less happily imagined.

" The taper'd choir, at the late hour of pray'r,
Oft let me tread, while to th' according voice
The many-sounding organ peals on high,
The clear slow dittied chaunt, or varied hymn,
Till all my soul is bath'd in extacies,
And lap'd in paradise. Or let me sit
Far in sequester'd aisles of the deep dome,
There lonesome listen to the sacred sounds,
That, as they lengthen thro' the Gothic vaults,
In hollow murmurs reach my ravish'd ear.
Nor when the lamps expiring yield to night,
And solitude returns, would I forsake
The solemn mansion, but attentive mark
The due clock swinging slow with sweepy sway,
Measuring Time's flight with momentary sound."

The following description of a Siberian exile is given with the hand of a master:

" To me far happier seems the banish'd lord,
Amid Siberia's unrejoicing wilds,
Who pines all lonesome, in the chambers hoar
Of some high castle shut, whose windows dim,
In distant ken, discover trackless plains,
Where Winter ever whirls his icy car,
While still repeated objects of his view,
The gloomy battlements and ivied spires,
That crown the solitary doom, arise;
While from the topmost turret the slow clock,
Far heard along th' inhospitable wastes,
With sad returning chime awakes new grief."

In the succeeding passage the chearful and the pathetic are beautifully blended:

" As seen by shepherds from Hymetto's brow,
What dædal landscapes smile! here palmy groves,
Resounding once with Plato's voice, arise,
Amid whose umbrage green her silver head
Th' unfading olive lifts; here vine-clad hills
Lay forth their purple store, and sunny vales
In prospects vast, their level laps expand,
Amid whose beauties glistening Athens towers.
Tho' thro' the blissful scenes Illissus roll
His sage inspiring flood, whose winding marge
The thick-wove laurel shades; tho' roseate morn
Pour all her splendours on th' empurpled scene;
Yet feels the hoary hermit truer joys,
As from the cliff that o'er his cavern hangs
He views the piles of fall'n Persepolis
In deep arrangements hide the darksome plain.
Unbounded waste! the mould'ring obelisk
Here, like a blasted oak, ascends the clouds;
Here Parian domes their vaulted halls disclose
Horrid with thorn, where lurks th' empitying thief,
Whence flits the twilight-loving bat at eve,
And the deaf adder wreaths her spotted train,
The dwellings once of elegance and art.
Here temples rise, amid whose hallow'd bounds
Spires the black pine, while thro' the naked street,
Once haunt of tradeful merchants, springs the grass:
Here columns, heap'd on prostrate columns, torn
From their firm base, increase the mouldering mass.
Far as the sight can pierce, appear the spoils
Of sunk magnificence! a blended scene
Of moles, fanes, arches, domes, and palaces,
Where, with his brother Horror, Ruin sits.

The following inscription for a hermitage at Ansley-Hall, is beautifully simple and characteristic; and, I think, scarcely inferior to Milton in his best manner:

Beneath this stony roof reclin'd
I sooth to peace my pensive mind:
And while to shade my lowly cave,
Embowering elms their umbrage wave;
And while the maple dish is mine,
The beechen cup unstain'd with wine:
I scorn the gay licentious crowd,
Nor heed the toys that deck the proud.

Within my limits, lone and still,
The blackbird pipes in artless trill;
Fast by my couch congenial guest,
The wren has wove her mossy nest;
From busy scenes and brighter skies,
To lurk with innocence she flies;
Here hopes in safe repose to dwell,
Nor aught suspects the sylvan cell.

At noon I take my custom'd round,
To mark how buds yon shrubby mound;
And every opening primrose count,
That trimly paints my blooming mount:
Or o'er the sculptures quaint and rude,
That trace my gloomy solitude,
I teach in winding wreaths to stray
Fantastic ivy's gadding spray.

At eve, within yon studious nook,
I ope my brass-embossed book,

Pourtray'd with many a holy deed
Of martyrs crown'd with heavenly meed:
Then as my taper waxes dim,
Chaunt, ere I sleep, my measur'd hymn;
And, at the close, the gleams behold
Of parting wings bedropt with gold.

While such pure joys my bliss create,
Who but would smile at guilty state?
Who but would wish his holy lot
In calm oblivion's humble grot?
Who but would cast his pomp away,
To take my staff and amice gray;
And to the world's tumultuous stage
Prefer the blameless hermitage.

In the monody written at Stratford upon Avon, we meet with the following picturesque lines:

Avon, thy rural views, thy pastures wild,
The willows that o'er-hang thy twilight edge,
The bows entangling with th' embattled sedge:
Thy brink with watery foliage quaintly fring'd,
Thy surface with reflected verdure ting'd;
Sooth me with many a pensive pleasure mild.
But while I muse that here the bard divine,
Whose sacred dust yon high arch'd ailes inclose,
Where the tall windows rise in stately rows
Above th' embowering shade,
Here first at Fancy's fairy circled shrine,
Of daisies pied his infant-offering made;
Here playful yet, in stripling years unripe,
Fram'd of thy reeds a shrill and artless pipe:

Sudden thy beauties, Avon, all are fled,
As at the waving of some magic wand;
An holy trance my charmed spirit wings,
And awful shapes of warriors and of kings
People the busy mead,
Like spectres swarming to the wizard hall.

The little ode entitled The Hamlet, written in Whichwood Forest, contains so delightful a picture of rural life, that I cannot resist the pleasure of giving the whole of it.

The hinds how blest, who ne'er beguil'd
To quit their hamlet's hawthorn wild;
Nor haunt the crowd, nor tempt the main,
For splendid care or guilty gain!
When Morning's twilight-tinctur'd beam
Strikes their low thatch with slaunting gleam,
They rove abroad in ether blue,
To dip the scythe in fragrant dew:
The sheaf to bind, the beech to fell,
That nodding shades a craggy dell.

'Midst gloomy glades, in warbles clear,
Wild nature's sweetest notes they hear:
On green untrodden banks they view
The hyacinth's neglected hue:
In their lone haunts, and woodland rounds,
They spy the squirrel's airy bounds:
And startle from her ashen spray,
Across the glen, the screaming jay:
Each native charm their steps explore
Of Solitude's sequester'd store.

For them the moon, with cloudless ray,
Mounts, to illume their homeward way:
Their weary spirits to relieve,
The meadow's incense breathe at eve.
No riot mars the simple fare,
That o'er a glimmering hearth they share:
But when the curfew's measur'd roar
Duly, the darkening vallies o'er,
Has echoed from the distant town,
They wish no beds of cygnet-down,
No trophied canopies to close
Their drooping eyes in quick repose.

Their little sons, who spread the bloom
Of health around the clay-built room,
Or thro' the primros'd coppice stray,
Or gambol in the new-mown hay;
Or quaintly braid the cowslip-twine,
Or drive a-field the tardy kine;
Or hasten from the sultry hill
To loiter at the shady rill;
Or climb the tall pine's gloomy crest
To rob the raven's antient nest.

Their humble porch, with honied flowers,
The curling woodbine's shade embowers;
From the small garden's thymy mound
Their bees in busy swarms resound:
Nor fell Disease, before his time,
Hastes to consume life's golden prime:
But when their temples long have wore
The silver-crown of tresses hoar;
As studious still calm peace to keep,
Beneath a flowery turf they sleep.

The ode written at [w] Vale Royal Abbey, in Cheshire, appears to have been modelled from Gray's Church-Yard Elegy.

The following description of the ruined abbey is highly picturesque, and scarcely surpassed by Gray or any other poet.

How sunk the scene where cloister'd leisure mus'd!
Where way-worn Edward paid his awful vow;
And lavish of magnificence diffus'd
His crowded spires o'er the broad mountain's brow!

The golden fans that o'er the turrets strown,
Quick glancing to the sun, wild music made,
Are reft, and every battlement o'ergrown
With knotted thorns, and the tall sapling's shade.

The prickly thistle spreads its plumy crest,
And matted nettles shade the crumbling mass,
Where shone the pavement's surface smooth, imprest
With rich reflection of the storied glass.

Here hardy chieftains slept in proud repose,
Sublimely shrin'd in gorgeous imagery;
And thro' the lessening aisles, in radiant rows,
Their consecrated banners hung on high.

There oxen brouze, and there the sable yew,
Thro' the dun void, displays its baleful glooms;
And sheds, in lingering drops, congenial dew,
O'er the forgotten graves and shatter'd tombs.

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[w] Founded by King Edward the First, about the year 1300, in consequence of a vow that he made when in danger of being shipwrecked in his return from a crusade.

By the slow clock in stately measur'd chime,
That from the massy tower tremendous toll'd,
No more the plowman counts the tedious time,
Nor distant shepherd pens his twilight fold.

High o'er the trackless heath at midnight seen,
No more the windows, rang'd in long array,
Where the tall shaft and fretted nook between
Thick ivy twines, the taper'd rites betray.

Ev'n now, amid the wavering ivy wreaths,
(While kindred thoughts the pensive sounds inspire)
When the weak breeze in many a whisper breathes,
I seem to listen to the chaunting quire.

The antient usages of the abbey are thus happily pourtrayed:

Sore-beat by storms in glory's arduous way,
Here might ambition muse, a pilgrim sage:
Here raptur'd, see religion's evening ray
Gild the calm walk of his reposing age.

Here antient art her dedal fancies play'd
In the quaint mazes of the crisped roof;
In mellow glooms the speaking pane array'd,
And rang'd the cluster'd column, massy-proof.

Here learning, guarded from a barbarous age,
Hover'd awhile, nor dar'd attempt the day;
But patient trac'd upon the pictur'd page
The holy legend, or heroic lay.

Hither the solitary minstrel came,
An honour'd guest, while the grim evening sky
Hung low'ring, and around the social flame,
Tun'd his bold harp to tales of chivalry.

In the "Ode sent to a Friend on his leaving a favourite Village in Hampshire," are further specimens of the talents of Warton for descriptive poetry. How pathetically does he thus lament the absence of his friend in the scenes over which they had been wont to rove together!

Ah! mourn thou lov'd retreat, no more
Shall classic steps thy scenes explore!
When Morn's pale rays but faintly peep
O'er yonder oak-crown'd airy steep,
Who now shall climb its brows to view
The length of landscape, ever new,
Where summer flings, in careless pride,
Her varied landscape far and wide?
Who mark, beneath, each village charm,
Or grange, or elm-encircl'd farm;
The flinty dovecote's crowded roof,
Watch'd by the kite that sails aloof.
The tufted pines whose umbrage tall
Darkens the long-deserted hall;
The veteran beech, that on the plain
Collects at eve the playful train;
The cot that smokes with early fire,
The low-roof'd fane's embosom'd spire?

Who now shall indolently stray
Thro' the deep forest's tangled way;
Pleas'd, at his custom'd task, to find
The well-known hoary-tressed hind,
That toils with feeble hands to glean,
Of wither'd bough, his pittance mean?
Who, 'mid thy nooks of hazle sit,
Lost in some melancholy fit,

And listening to the raven's croak,
The distant flail, the falling oak?
Who, thro' the sunshine and the shower,
Descry the rainbow-painted tower?
Who wandering at return of May,
Catch the first cuckoo's vernal lay?
Who, musing waste the summer-hour,
Where high o'er-arching trees embower?
Unnotic'd now at twilight dawn,
Returning reapers cross the lawn;
Nor fond attention loves to note
The weather's bell from folds remote:
While own'd by no poetic eye,
Thy pensive evenings shade the sky!

The sonnets of Warton are much admired, but I will only insert the following, "Written at Winslade in Hampshire."

Winslade, thy beech-capt hills, with waving grain
Mantled, thy checquer'd views of wood and lawn,
Whilom could charm, or when the gradual dawn
'Gan the gray mist with orient purple stain,
Or evening glimmer'd o'er the folded train:
Her fairest landscapes whence my muse has drawn,
Too free with servile courtly praise to fawn,
Too weak to try the buskin's stately strain:
Yet now no more thy slopes of beech and corn,
Nor views invite, since he far-distant strays
With whom I trac'd their sweets at eve and morn
From Albion far to cull Hesperian bays;
In this alone they please, howe'er forlorn,
That still they can recal those happier days.

MORNING:

AN ODE.

THE AUTHOR CONFINED TO COLLEGE, 1745.

In this Ode the author feelingly laments his inability to enjoy the delicious scenery he thus happily describes.

Once more the vernal sun's ambrosial beams
The fields, as with a purple robe adorn:
Charwell, thy sedgy banks, and glistering streams,
All laugh and sing at mild approach of Morn,
Thro' the deep groves I hear the chaunting birds,
And thro' the clover'd vale the various-lowing herds.

Up mounts the mower from his lowly thatch,
Well pleas'd the progress of the Spring to mark,
The fragrant breath of breezes pure to catch,
And startle from her couch the early lark;
More genuine pleasures sooth his tranquil breast
Than high-thron'd kings can boast in eastern glory drest.

The pensive poet thro' the green wood steals,
Or treads the willow'd marge of murmuring brook;
Or climbs the steep ascent of airy hills;
Then sits him down beneath a branching oak,
Whence various scenes, and prospects wide below,
Still teach his musing mind with fancies high to glow.

But I not with the day awake to bliss,
(Inelegant to me fair Nature's face,
A blank the beauty of the Morning is,
And grief and darkness all for light and grace)
Nor bright the sun, nor green the meads appear,
Nor colours charm mine eye, nor melody mine ear.

Me, void of elegance and manners mild,
With leaden rod, stern Discipline restrains,
Stiff pedantry, of learned pride the child,
My roving genius binds in Gothic chains;
Nor can the cloister'd Muse expand her wing,
Nor bid these twilight roofs with her gay carols ring.

In the fine "Ode on the Approach of Summer," Warton had in his eye the Allegro of Milton, as the following passage will evidently shew.

"Haste thee, Nymph! and hand in hand,
With thee lead a buxom band;
Bring fantastic-footed Joy,
With Sport, that yellow-tressed boy;
Leisure, that thro' the balmy sky
Chases a crimson butterfly.
Bring Health, that loves in early dawn
To meet the milk-maid on the lawn;
Bring Pleasure, rural nymph, and Peace,
Meek, cottage-loving shepherdess!
And that sweet stripling, Zephyr, bring,
Light, and for ever on the wing.
Bring the dear Muse that loves to lean
On river margins, mossy green.

But who is she that bears thy train,
Pacing light the velvet plain?
The pale pink binds her auburn hair,
Her tresses flow with pastoral air;
'Tis May, the grace—confest she stands,
By branch of hawthorn in her hands:
Lo! near her trip the lightsome dews,
Their wings all ting'd in Iris' hues;
With whom the powers of Flora play,
And paint with pansies all the way.

Oft when thy season, sweetest Queen,
Has drest the groves in livery green;
When in each fair and fertile field
Beauty begins her bower to build;
While Evening, veil'd in shadows brown,
Puts her matron mantle on,
And mists in spreading steams convey
More fresh the fumes of new-shorn hay;
Then, goddess, guide my pilgrim feet
Contemplation hoar to meet,
As slow he winds in museful mood,
Near the rush'd marge of Cherwell's flood.
Or o'er old Avon's magic edge,
Whence Shakespeare cull'd the spiky sedge,
All playful yet, in years unripe,
To frame a shrill and simple pipe.
There thro' the dusk, but dimly seen,
Sweet evening objects intervene;
His wattled cotes the shepherd plants,
Beneath her elm the milkmaid chaunts.
The woodman speeding home, awhile
Rests him at a shady stile.

Nor wants there fragrance to dispense
Refreshment o'er my soothed sense;
Nor tangled woodbines balmy bloom,
Nor grass besprent to breathe perfume,
Nor lurking wild-thyme's spicy sweet,
To bathe in dew my roving feet.
Nor wants there note of Philomel,
Nor sound of distant-tinkling bell:
Nor lowings faint of herds remote,
Nor mastiffs bark from bosom'd cot;
Rustle the breezes, lightly borne,
Or deep embattled ears of corn:
Round antient elm, with humming noise,
Full loud the chaffer-swarms rejoice.
Meantime, a thousand dies invest
The ruby chambers of the west!
That all aslant the village tower,
A mild reflected radiance pour,
While, with the level-streaming rays,
Far seen its arched windows blaze;
And the tall grove's green top is dight
In russet tints, and gleams of light:
So that the gay scene, by degrees,
Bathes my blithe heart in extasies;
And Fancy, to my ravish'd sight,
Pourtrays her kindred visions bright.
At length the parting light subdues
My soften'd soul to calmer views,
And fainter shapes of pensive joy,
As twilight dawns, my mind employ;
Till from the path I fondly stray
In musing lapt, nor heed the way;

Wandering thro' the landscape still,
Till Melancholy has her fill;
And on each moss-wove border damp,
The glow-worm hangs his fairy-lamp.

After enumerating the milder pleasures of Evening, the poet, in the following lines, no less beautiful, paints the more varied and livelier features of a Summer Noon.

When the sun, at noon-tide hour,
Sits throned in his highest tower;
Me heart-rejoicing goddess lead
To the tann'd haycock in the mead:
To mix in rural wood among
The nymphs and swains, a busy throng;
Or as the tepid odours breathe,
The russet piles to lean beneath:
There, as my listless limbs are thrown
On couch more soft than palace down;
I listen to the busy sound
Of mirth and toil that hums around;
And see the team shrill tinkling pass,
Alternate o'er the furrow'd grass.

But ever, after summer shower,
When the bright sun's returning power,
With laughing beam has chas'd the storm,
And cheer'd reviving Nature's form;
By sweetbriar hedges, bath'd in dew,
Let me my wholesome path pursue;
There issuing forth the frequent snail
Wears the dank way with slimy trail,

While as I walk from pearled bush,
The sunny sparkling drops I brush,
And all the landscape fair I view,
Clad in robe of fresher hue;
And so loud the blackbird sings,
That far and near the valley rings.
From shelter deep of shaggy rock
The shepherd drives his joyful flock;
From bowering beech, the mower blythe,
With new-born vigour grasps his scythe;
While o'er the smooth unbounded meads
His last faint gleam the rainbow spreads.

From this busy and burning scene, we are next conducted

——— to the rock-arch'd seat,
O'er whose dim mouth an ivy'd oak
Hangs nodding from the low-brow'd rock,
Haunted by that chaste nymph alone,
Whose waters cleave the smoothed stone;
Which, as they gush upon the ground,
Still scatter misty dews around:
A rustic, wild, grotesque alcove,
Its side with mantling woodbines wove;
Cool as the cave where Cilo dwells,
Whence Helicon's fresh fountain wells;
Or noon-tide grot, where Sylvan sleeps
In hoar Licaon's piny steeps.
Me, Goddess, in such cavern lay,
While all without is scorch'd in day.

The contrast of these, and the lines which next follow, is strongly marked, and highly beautiful.

Sore sighs the weary swain, beneath
His withering hawthorn on the heath;
The drooping hedger wishes eve,
In vain, of labour short reprieve!
Meantime on Afric's glowing sands,
Smote with keen heat the traveller stands:
Low sinks his heart, while round his eye
Measures the scenes that boundless lie,
Ne'er yet by foot of mortal worn,
Where thirst, wan pilgrim, walks forlorn.
How does he wish some cooling wave
To slake his lips, or limbs to lave!
And thinks, in every whisper low,
He hears a bursting fountain flow.

This Ode, in every part of it, so sparkles with beauties, that I feel much difficulty to refrain from transcribing it entire: the following passages, however, must conclude my extracts.

O bear me to yon antique wood,
Dim temple of sage Solitude!
There within a nook most dark,
Where none my musing mood may mark;
Let me, in many a whisper'd rite,
The genius old of Greece invite,
With that fair wreath my brows to bind,
Which, for his chosen imps, he twin'd,
Well nurtur'd in Pierian lore,
On clear Ilissus' laureat shore—
Till high, on waving nest reclin'd,
The raven wakes my tranced mind!
Or to the forest-fringed vale,
Where widow'd turtles love to wail,

Where cowslips, clad in mantle meek,
Nod their tall heads to breezes weak:
In the midst, with sedges gray
Crown'd, a scant riv'let winds its way,
And trembling thro' the weedy wreathes,
Around an oozy freshness breathes.
O'er the solitary green,
Nor cot, nor loitering hind is seen:
Nor aught alarms the mute repose,
Save that by fits an heifer lows:
A scene might tempt some peaceful sage
To rear him a lone hermitage;
Fit place his pensive eld might chuse
On Virtue's holy lore to muse.

But when mild Morn, in saffron stole,
First issues from her eastern goal,
Let not my due feet fail to climb
Some breezy summit's brow sublime,
Whence Nature's universal face,
Illumin'd smiles with new-born grace;
The misty streams that wind below,
With silver-sparkling lustre glow;
The groves and castled cliffs appear,
Invested all in radiance clear.
O! every village charm beneath!
The smoke that mounts in azure wreath!
O beauteous rural interchange!
The simple spire, and elmy grange!
Content, indulging blissful hours,
Whistles o'er the fragrant flowers,
And cattle rouz'd to pasture new,
Shake jocund from their sides the dew.

'Tis thee alone, O Summer mild,
Canst bid me carol wood-notes wild:
Whene'er I view thy genial scenes,
Thy waving woods, embroider'd greens,
What fires within my bosom wake,
How glows my mind the reed to take!
What charms like thine the Muse can call,
With whom 'tis youth and laughter all;
With whom each field's a paradise,
And all the globe a bower of bliss!
With thee conversing all the day,
I meditate my lightsome lay.
These pedant cloisters let me leave,
To breathe my votive song at eve.
In valleys where mild whispers use
Of shade and stream, to court the Muse,
While wandering o'er the brook's dim verge,
I hear the stock-dove's dying dirge.

But when life's busier scene is o'er,
And age shall give the tresses hoar,
I'd fly soft Luxury's marble dome,
And make an humble thatch my home,
Which sloping hills around inclose,
Where many a beech and brown oak grows;
Beneath whose dark and branching bowers,
Its tides a far-fam'd river pours:
By Nature's beauties taught to please,
Sweet Tusculan of rural ease,
Still grot of peace!

The poet closes this exquisite Ode in the following apostrophe to his favourite art.

O, ever sweet to Poesy,
Let me live true votary!
She shall lead me by the hand,
Queen of sweet smiles, and solace bland!
She from her precious stores shall shed
Ambrosial flowrets o'er my head;
She, from my tender youthful cheek,
Can wipe, with lenient finger meek,
The secret and unpitied tear,
Which still I drop in darkness drear.
She shall be my blooming bride,
With her, as years successive glide,
I'll hold divinest dalliance,
For ever hold in holy trance.

The Allegro of Milton is evidently the source and groundwork of this beautiful ode of Warton; and I have no hesitation in pronouncing, that in vividness of fancy, in richness of colouring, and variety of imagery, [y] this ode may be placed in the same rank with its archetype. If the objection to the use of old, and almost obsolete [z] words, which has been urged against this

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[y] That the severe eye of criticism may not find some blemish in this poem, I will not assert, for where is the production that is perfect? but I will affirm its beauties to be so numerous, that he can have little taste who would not readily overlook the slight defects of arrangement, &c. for the many brilliant passages with which it abounds.

[z] But if compell'd by want, you may produce,
And bring an antiquated word in use;
A word erst well receiv'd in days of yore,
A word our old forefathers us'd before:

poem, were allowed to have any weight, this is an objection which would apply equally to Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton, but more especially to the latter, who, it has been said, "chose to write a hundred years backward." [a] The genuine bard delights in folding himself up in this antique garb, and thus throwing a sort of mysticism around his compositions; and not only to anticipate the future, but to revive and to recal the times that are past. By these means his antient character is, in some degree, restored; and he is again that prophet, that holy and sacred diviner, which he was primarily considered.

It was my design to have taken a slight notice of several other of our descriptive poets, as well as to have offered some specimens from their works; but those already given have occupied so much larger a space than was intended, that I must only briefly

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Well pleas'd the reader's wonder to engage,
He brings our grandsire's habit on the stage,
And garbs that whilom grac'd an uncouth age.

VIDA's Art of Poetry.

What we call polishing, diminishes a language; it makes many words obsolete; it coops a man up in a corner, allows him but one set of phrases, and deprives him of many significant terms, and strong beautiful expressions, which he must venture upon, like Virgil, at the hazard of appearing antiquated and homely.

BLACKWALL's Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer.

[a] Les poëtes (parmi les Grecs) etoient leurs prophetes, ils les regardoient comme, les amis des dieux, et comme des hommes inspirés; et avoient pour leurs ouvrages un respect approchant, si j'ose en faire la comparaison, de celui que nous avons pour les saintes ecritures.

Traité du Choix et de la Methode des Etudes, par l'Abbé Fleury.

notice one or two of the most conspicuous of my immediate contemporaries; and here the first name that will occur to every reader, will, doubtless, be that of our late lamented [b] Cowper, whose Task exhibits some of the most admired specimens of descriptive poetry. The third, fifth, and sixth books, entitled The Garden, The Winter Morning's Walk, and The Winter Walk at Noon, abound with beauties of this character; but quotations would be impertinent from a poet whose works are in every body's hands.

Among descriptive poets, I cannot help allotting to Mr. Southey a very distinguished rank. Besides the inscriptions,

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[b] If the days in which we immediately live, have not shewn themselves to be equally rich in poetic talent with those, which, producing the extraordinary minds of a Shakspeare and a Milton, of a Dryden and a Pope, have raised our country to a doubtful competition with Greece in her pride of youth, still are they not exposed to the reproach of any peculiar penury or destitution; and some of our contemporaries might be adduced to demonstrate, that our northern clime can still give birth to souls, who are able, occasionally, to wing their flight to 'the heaven of invention,' and to bring thence the evidence of their 'commerce with the skies,' in 'thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.'

In the foremost rank, and, perhaps, at the head of these more ætherial spirits, we must place the benevolent, the moral, the religious, and we are almost induced to say, the holy Cowper. In all his writings, which display great facility of composition, and a redundant flow of matter, we are gratified with the authentic and rich fancy of a poet. Without any apparent effort, and disdainful of all ambitious and affected ornaments, the muse of Cowper can be impressive and pathetic, dignified and sublime.

The Task is truly a work of high and rare merit, &c.

Analytical Review for September, 1798.

which I have already slightly noticed, there are, in many of his other productions, beauties of this kind, although I am sorry to see him of late betraying instances of negligence that would disgrace a much inferior writer.

The finest passages in his epic poem of [c] Joan of Arc, are, unquestionably, those which describe the varied beauties of rural and sylvan scenery—morning—evening—sun-rise—sun-set—the effects of storm—or the calm of moon-light stillness, &c. &c.

The whole compass of poetry can, perhaps, shew scarcely any thing superior to the following delicious fragments.

So on they went,
And now along the mountain's winding path
Upward they journied slow, and now they paus'd,
And gaz'd, where o'er the plain the stately towers
Of Vaucoleur arose, in distance seen,
Dark and distinct; below the castled height,
Thro' fair and fertile pastures, the deep Meuse
Roll'd glittering on. Domrimis' cottages
Gleam'd in the sun hard by, white cottages
That in the evening traveller's weary mind
Had waken'd thoughts of comfort and of home,
Till his heart ach'd for rest. But on one spot,

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[c] The poetical powers displayed in this poem (Joan of Arc) are of a very superior kind. Conceptions more lofty and daring, sentiments more commanding, and language more energetic, than some of the best passages this poem afford, will not easily be found: nor does scarcely any part of it sink to languor; as the glow of feeling and genius animates the whole. The language is, for the most part, modelled on that of Milton, and not unfrequently it has a strong relish of Shakspeare.

Monthly Review for April, 1796.

One little spot, the virgin's eye was fix'd,
Her native Arc; embowered the hamlet lay
Upon the forest edge, whose antient woods,
With all their infinite varieties,
Now form'd a mass of shade. The distant plain
Rose on th' horizon, rich with pleasant groves,
And vineyards in the greenest hue of spring,
And streams now hidden on their devious way,
Now winding forth in light.

JOAN of ARC, Book I. p. 101.

Amid these wilds
Often to summer-pasture have I driven
The flock; and well I know these mountains wilds,
And every bosom'd vale, and valley stream,
Is dear to memory. I have laid me down
Beside yon valley-stream that up th' ascent
Scarce sends the sound of waters now, and watch'd
The tide roll glittering to the noon-tide sun,
And listen'd to its ceaseless murmuring,
Till all was hush'd and tranquil in my soul,
Fill'd with a strange and undefin'd delight,
That pass'd across the mind like summer clouds
Over the lake at eve; their fleeting hues
The traveller cannot trace with Memory's eye,
Yet he remembers well how fair they were,
How very lovely.

Here in solitude
My soul was nurst, amid the loveliest scenes
Of unpolluted nature. Sweet it was,
As the white mists of Morning roll'd away,
To see the mountains wooded heights appear

Dark in the early dawn, and mark its slope,
Rich with the blossom'd furze, as the slant sun
On golden ripeness pour'd a deepening light.
Pleasant at noon, beside the vocal brook,
To lie me down, and watch the floating clouds,
And shape, to Fancy's wild similitudes,
Their ever-varying forms; and oh, most sweet!
To drive my flock at evening to the fold,
And hasten to our little hut, and hear
The voice of kindness bid me welcome home.

Book I. p. 108.

Lonely the forest spring: a rocky hill
Rises beside it, and an aged yew
Bursts from the rifted crag that over brows
The waters, cavern'd there unseen, and slow
And silently they well. The adder's tongue,
Rich with the wrinkles of his glossy green,
Hangs down its long lank leaves, whose wavy dip
Just breaks the tranquil surface. Antient woods
Bosom the quiet beauties of the place,
Nor ever sound profanes it, save such sounds
As silence loves to hear, the passing wind,
Or the low murmuring of the scarce-heard stream,
A blessed spot!

——— thitherward
On a spring eve I had betaken me,
And there I sat and mark'd the deep-red clouds
Gather before the wind, the rising wind,
Whose sudden gusts, each wilder than the last,
Seem'd as they rock'd my senses. Soon the night
Darken'd around, and the large rain-drops fell

Heavy: anon with tempest rage the storm
Howl'd o'er the wood. Methought the heavy rain
Fell with a grateful coolness on my head,
And the hoarse dash of waters, and the rush
Of winds that mingled with the forest roar,
Made a wild music.

Book I. p. 128.

And now beneath th' horizon westering slow
Had sunk the orb of day: o'er all the vale
A perfect softness spread, save where the tree
Its giant shadow stretch'd, or winding stream
Mirror'd the light of Heav'n, still trac'd distinct
When twilight dimly shrouded all beside.
A grateful coolness freshen'd the calm air,
And the hoarse grasshoppers their evening song
Sung shrill and ceaseless, as the dews of night
Descended. On their way the travellers wend,
Chearing the road with converse, till far off
They mark a cottage taper's glimmering light
Gleam thro' the embowered gloom: to that they turn;
An aged man came forth; his thin gray locks
Wav'd on the night-breeze, and on his shrunk face
The characters of age were written deep.
Them louting low, with rustic courtesy,
He welcom'd in, on the white-ember'd hearth
Heap'd up fresh fuel, then, with friendly care,
Spread out the homely board, and fill'd the bowl
With the red produce of the vine that arch'd
His evening seat; they of the plain repast
Partook, and quaff'd the pure and pleasant bowl.

Book II. p. 135.

Fair dawn'd the morning, and the early sun
Pour'd on the lattic'd cot a chearful gleam,
And up the travellers rose, and on their way
Hasten'd, their dangerous way, thro' fertile tracks
The waste of war. They pass'd the Auxerrois;
Th' autumnal rains had beaten to the earth
The unreap'd harvest, from the village church
No ev'n-song bell was heard, the shepherd's dog
Prey'd on the scatter'd flock, for there was now
No hand to feed him; and upon the hearth,
Where he had slumber'd at his master's feet,
The rank weed flourish'd. Did they sometimes find
A welcome, he who welcom'd them was one
Who linger'd in the place where he was born,
For that was all that he had left to love.

Book III. p. 171.

Scarce had the earliest ray from Chinon's towers
Made visible the mists that curl'd along
The winding waves of Vienne, when from her couch
Started the martial Maid.

Book V. p. 5.

The sixth sun
Purpling the sky with his dilated light,
Sunk westering; when embosom'd in the depth
Of [d] that old forest, that for many a league
Shadows the hills and vales of Orleannois,
They pitch their tents. The hum of occupation

[d] The forest of Orleans contains 13,000 acres of various kinds of wood.

Sounds ceaseless. Waving to the evening gale,
The streamers wanton; and ascending slow
Beneath the foliage of the forest trees,
With many a light hue ting'd, the curling smoke
Melts in th' impurpled air.

Book v. p. 7.

The night was calm, and many a moving cloud
Shadow'd the moon. Along the forest glade,
With swift foot, Conrade past—and now had reach'd
The plain, where whilome by the pleasant Loire,
Cheer'd with the song, the rustics had beheld
The day go down upon their merriment:
No song of peace now echoed on its banks.
There tents were pitch'd, and there the centinel,
Slow pacing on his sullen rounds, beheld
The frequent corse roll down the tainted stream.
Conrade, with wider sweep, pursued his way,
Shunning the camp, now hush'd in sleep and still.
And now no sound was heard, save of the Loire,
Murmuring along.

Book vi. p. 47.

Sad was the scene. There all the live-long night
Steals in the straggling fugitive; as when,
Past is the storm, and o'er the azure sky
Serenely shines the sun; with every breeze
The waving branches drop their gather'd rain,
Renewing the remembrance of the storm.

Book vi. p. 80.

Now was the noon of night, and all was still,
Save where the centinel pac'd on his rounds,
Humming a broken song.

The night was calm;
Fair as was ever on Chaldea's plain
When the pale moon-beams o'er the silvery scene
Shone cloudless, whilst the watchful shepherd's eye
Survey'd the hosts of heaven, and mark'd them rise
Successive, and successively decay,
Lost in the stream of light, as lesser springs
Amid Euphrates' current.

Book VIII. p. 134.

Each in the post allotted, restless wait
The day break.

Morning came: dim thro' the shade
The first rays glimmer; soon the brightening clouds
Drink the rich beam, and o'er the landscape spread
The dewy light.

Book VIII. p. 140.

The productions of the two Scottish poets, Michael Bruce and Robert Burns, have not, till of late, attracted that share of the public estimation, which I always considered their merits might lay claim to.

The name of Bruce was first made known by the authors of the Mirror, in a quotation from his affecting "Elegy written in Spring:" and Dr. Drake, in his Literary Hours, has attempted to recommend to further notice the poetry of this amiable but unfortunate youth, by the insertion, in his interesting miscellany, of two extracts from the descriptive poem of Lochleven. I shall here introduce a few other passages from the same poem, which I think are of equal beauty with those selected by Dr. Drake, and are more particularly connected with the nature of the subjects of these remarks.

e Lochleven

Hail! native land! where, on the flowery banks
Of Leven, beauty ever blooming dwells;
A wreath of roses, dropping with the dews
Of morning, circles her ambrosial locks,
Loose waving o'er her shoulders; where she treads
Attendant on her steps the blushing Spring,
And Summer wait, to raise the various flowers
Beneath her footsteps.

And now, while Nature smiles on all her works,
Oft let me tread thy cowslip cover'd banks,
O Leven! and the landscape measure round.
From gay Kinross, whose stately tufted groves
Nod o'er the lake, transported let mine eye
Wander o'er all the various checquer'd scene,
Of wilds and fertile fields, and glittering streams,
To ruin'd Arnot; or ascend the height

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e Lochleven is a beautiful fresh water lake, near twelve miles in circumference, on the side next Kinross, bounded by a plain, occupied by open groves, on the other side by mountains. A spot abounding in so much lovely scenery, and rendered still more attracted by the associations of childhood, and early youth, would necessarily impress on the susceptible heart of the young poet the most lively and endearing sensations; and when far distant from his humble shed and tender parents, when suffering under sickness and sorrow, it was a consolation of no vulgar kind to recollect the pleasures of his native vale, to paint, in glowing colours, its delicious landscapes, and, ere the fairy colours faded from his view, to give them local habitation and a name, in strains which should perpetuate his memory and his genius.

Literary Hours, No. xxi.

Of rocky Lomond, where a riv'let pure
Bursts from the ground, and thro' the crumbled crags
Tinkles amusive. From the mountain's top,
Around me spread I see the goodly scene!
Enclosures green, that promise to the swain
The future harvest; many colour'd meads;
Irriguous vales, where cattle low, and sheep
That whiten half the hills; sweet rural farms
Oft interspers'd, the seats of past'ral love
And innocence, with many a spiry dome,
Sacred to Heav'n, around whose hallow'd walls
Our fathers slumber in the narrow house.
Gay, beauteous villas, bosom'd in the woods,
Like constellations in the starry sky,
Complete the scene. The vales, the vocal hills,
The woods, the waters, and the heart of man,
Send out a general song; 'tis beauty all
To poet's eye, and music to his ear.

Nor is the shepherd silent on his hill,
His flocks around; nor school-boys, as they creep
Slow-pac'd tow'rds school; intent, with open pipe,
They wake, by turns, wild music on the way.

Behold the man of sorrows hail the light!
New risen from the bed of pain, where late,
Toss'd to and fro upon a couch of thorns,
He wak'd the long dark night, and wish'd for morn.
Soon as he feels the quickening beam of Heaven,
And balmy breath of May, among the fields
And flowers he takes his morning walk: his heart
Beats with new life; his eye is bright and blithe;
Health strews her roses o'er his cheek; renew'd

In youth and beauty, his unbidden tongue
Pours native harmony, and sings to Heav'n.

The following would furnish two good subjects for the pencil.

I know an aged swain, whose hoary head
Was bent with years, the village chronicle,
Who much had seen, and, from the former times,
Much had receiv'd. He, hanging o'er the hearth
In winter evenings, to the gaping swains,
And children circling round the fire, would tell
Stories of old, and tales of other times.

Now sober industry, illustrious power!
Hath rais'd the peaceful cottage, calm abode
Of innocence and joy———

——————— behold the village rise,
In rural pride, 'mong intermingled trees!
Above whose aged tops, the joyful swains
At even-tide descending from the hill,
With eye enamour'd, mark the many wreaths
Of pillar'd smoke, high curling to the clouds.

——————— gay on the green,
Young blooming boys, and girls with golden hair,
Trip nimble-footed, wanton in their play,
The village hope. All in a reverend row,
Their gray-hair'd grandsires, sitting in the sun,
Before the gate, and leaning on the staff,
The well remember'd stories of their youth
Recount, and shake their aged locks with joy.

The traveller stops, and gazes round and round
O'er all the scenes that animate his heart
With mirth and music. Even the mendicant,
Bow bent with age, that on the old gray stone
Sole sitting, suns him in the public way,
Feels his heart leap, and to himself he sings.

The poet's enumeration of the different rivers which empty themselves into the lake, is given in an interesting manner.

But chief thy stream,
O Gairney! sweetly winding, claims the song.
First on thy banks the Dorick reed I tun'd,
Stretch'd on the verdant grass; while twilight meek,
Enrob'd in mist, slow sailing thro' the air,
Silent and still on every closed flower
Shed drops nectareous; and around the fields
No noise was heard, save where the whispering reeds
Wav'd to the breeze, or in the dusky air
The slow-wing'd crane mov'd heav'ly o'er the Lea,
And shrilly clamour'd as he sought his nest.

But chief mine eye on the subjected vale
Of Leven pleas'd looks down; while o'er the trees
That shield the hamlet with the shade of years,
The towering smoke of early fire ascends,
And the shrill cock proclaims th' advanced morn.
How blest the man! who, in these peaceful plains,
Ploughs his paternal field; far from the noise,
The care, and bustle of a busy world.
All in the sacred, sweet, sequester'd vale
Of solitude, the secret primrose-path

Of rural life, he dwells.
Such is Agricola———

Deep in the bottom of the flow'ry vale,
With blooming fallows, and the leafy twine
Of verdant alders fenc'd, his dwelling stands
Complete in rural elegance. The door,
By which the poor, or pilgrim never pass'd,
Still open, speaks the master's bounteous heart.
There! O how sweet! amid the fragrant shrubs
At evening cool to sit; while on their boughs
The nestled songsters twitter o'er their young,
And the hoarse low of folded cattle breaks
The silence, wafted o'er the sleeping lake,
Whose waters glow beneath the purple tinge
Of western clouds; while converse sweet deceives
The stealing foot of Time. Or where the ground,
Mounded irregular, points out the graves
Of our forefathers, and the hallow'd fane
Where swains assembling worship, let us walk
In softly soothing melancholy thought,
As Night's seraphic liv'd, immortal Young!
Or sweet complaining Gray!

Of the poems of Burns, the greater proportion may be denominated descriptive; and, in point of beauty, many of them are entitled to no ordinary rank. Burns was no echo of others' echoes. He was, in a peculiar sense, the [f] Bard of Nature; and

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[f] The poems of Burns are sometimes struck off with a delicacy and artless simplicity that charms like the bewitching, though irregular touches of Shakspeare.

Monthly Review for 1786.

he painted her various works warm as the impression was imbibed from their contemplation. This poet having been one of the favourites even of my boyish days, I had frequently wondered that his works were not held in more general estimation. The late elegant edition may, perhaps, tend to fix the public eye more fully upon these productions of the once humble [g] plowman of Ayrshire.

The poems entitled "The Cotter's Saturday Night," and "The Mountain Daisy," having been already singled out by preceding writers, I shall make no extracts from either of these admired pieces, but shall present my readers with a few specimens from others that may be more peculiarly denominated descriptive, and which, I think, possess equal merit.

LAMENT

OF

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o'er daisies white
Out o'er the grassy lea:

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[g] See Robert Burn's Dedication to the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt.

Now Phœbus cheers the chrystal streams,
And glads the azure skies,
But nought can glad the weary wight
That fast in durance lies.

Now laverocks wake the merry morn,
Aloft on dewy wing:
The merle, in his noon-tide bower,
Makes woodland echoes ring;
The mavis wild, wi' many a note,
Sings drowsy day to rest:
In love and freedom they rejoice,
Wi' care nor thrall opprest.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
The primrose down the brae;
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the slae:
The meanest hind in all Scotland
May rove their sweets amang;
But I, the queen of a' Scotland,
Maun lie in prison strang.

I was the queen o' bonie France,
Where happy I hae been;
Full lightly rase I in the morn,
As blythe lay down at e'en:
And I'm the sovereign of Scotland,
And many a traitor there;
Yet here I lie in foreign band,
And never-ending care.

But as for thee, thou false woman,
My sister and my fae,
Grim Vengeance yet shall wet a sword,
That thro' thy soul shall gae:
The weeping blood, in woman's breast,
Was never known to thee;
Nor th' balm that drops on wounds of woe
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

My son! My son! may kinder stars
Upon thy fortune shine:
And may those pleasures gild thy reign,
That ne'er would blink on mine!
God keep thee frae thy mother's foes,
Or turn their hearts to thee;
And when thou meet'st thy mother's friend,
Remember him for me!

Oh! soon to me, may summer-suns
Nae mair light up the morn!
Nae mair to me, the autumn winds,
Wave o'er the yellow corn!
And in the narrow house o' Death
Let Winter round me rave;
And the next flowers that deck the Spring,
Bloom on my peaceful grave!

The tender melancholy of this last verse is irresistible.

[h] BRUAR WATER.

(EXTRACT.)

The sober laverocks, warbling wild,
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdspink, musick's gayest child,
Shall sweetly join the choir:
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite clear,
The mavis mild, and mellow;
The robin pensive, autumn chear,
In all her locks of yellow.

This too a covert shall insure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maukin sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flow'rs;
Or find a sheltering safe retreat,
From prone descending flow'rs.

And here, by sweet endearing stealth,
Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds, with all their wealth,
As empty, idle care:

[h] Bruar-falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful.

The flow'rs shall vie in all their charms
The hour of heav'n to grace,
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoaking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain, gray;
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild checquering thro' the trees,
Rave to my darkly dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

PART OF AN ELEGY ON CAPT. M—— H——.

Mourn, little harebells, o'er the Lee;
Ye stately foxgloves, fair to see;
Ye woodbines hanging bonnily,
In scented bow'rs;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first of flow'rs.

At dawn, when every grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head,
At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed,
I' th' rustling gale,
Ye maukins wheddin thro' the glade,
Come join my wail.

Mourn, clam'ring craiks, at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flow'ring claver gay;
And when ye wing your annual way,
Frae our cauld shore,
Tell thae far warlds, wha lies in clay,
Wham we deplore.

Ye hovlets, frae your ivy bow'r,
In some auld tree, or eldritch tow'r,
What time the moon, wi' silent glow'r,
Sets up her horn,
Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour,
Till waukrife morn!

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear:
Thou simmer, while each corny spear
Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flow'ry tresses shear,
For him that's dead!

Thou Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear!
Thou, Winter, hurling thro' the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost!

All the epithets in the following little pieces are beautifully appropriate and descriptive.

THE BANKS OF AYR.

1.

The gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain:
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatter'd coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

2.

The Autumn mourns her ripening corn
By early Winter's ravage torn;
Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly:
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave,
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonie banks of Ayr.

3.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore;
Tho' death in every shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear:

But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonie banks of Ayr.

4.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched Fancy roves,
Pursuing past, unhappy loves!
Farewell, my friends! Farewell, my foes!
My peace with these, my love with those—
The bursting tears my heart declare,
Farewell, the bonie banks of Ayr.

SONG.

Again rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues,
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the violets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

The shepherd sticks his faulding slap,
And o'er the moorlands whistles shrill,
With wild, unequal, wandering step,
I meet him on the dewy hill.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings, on fluttering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I haumeward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
And raging bend the naked tree;
Thy gloom will soothe my chearless soul,
When Nature all is sad like me!

The two following stanzas, which are the close of a poem entitled "A Winter Night," are equally descriptive and moral.

I heard nae mair, for chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snow,
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage rousing crow.

But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
Thro' all his works abroad,
The heart benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God.

There is much tenderness in these detached passages from "The Lament."

O thou pale orb, that silent shines,
While care-untroubled mortals sleep!
Thou seest a wretch that inly pines,
And wanders here to wail and weep!
With woe I nightly vigils keep,
Beneath thy wan unwarming beam;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream.

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faintly-marked, distant hill:
I joyless view thy trembling horn,
Reflected in the gurgling rill.
My fondly fluttering heart be still!
Thou busy power, Remembrance, cease!
Ah! must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning peace!

Ye winged hours that o'er us past,
Enraptur'd more, the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast,
My fondly treasur'd thoughts employ'd.
That breast, how dreary now, and void,
For her too scanty once of room!
Ev'n every ray of hope destroy'd,
And not a wish to gild the gloom!

The morn that warns th' approaching day,
And wakes me up to toil and woe:
I see the hours in long array,
That I must suffer, lingering, slow.
Full many a pang, and many a throe,
Keen Recollection's direful train,
Must wing my soul, ere Phœbus, low,
Shall kiss the distant western main.

The following poem was the particular favourite of a period of life when I was fond of what is usually denominated "*spouting poetry*;" and my maturer judgment does not condemn my early choice.

This poem being too long to be inserted entire, I have only extracted the descriptive parts. The dialogue between the two brigs (bridges) is, indeed, prolix to tediousness.

THE BRIGS OF AYRE.

A POEM.

The simple bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-ton'd plovers, grey, wild whistling o'er the hill;
Shall he, nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern Misfortune's field;
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhimes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No, tho' his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the bard,
Fame, honest Fame, his great, his dear reward.

Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove in airy concert sings,
Except, perhaps, the robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half lang tree:
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noon-tide blaze,
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.

'Twas in that season, when a simple bard,
Unknown and poor, Simplicity's reward,
At night, within the antient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspir'd, or haply prest wi' care,
He left his bed, and took his wayward rout.

The drowsy [i] dungeon clock had number'd two,
And [i] Wallace tow'r had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln Firth, with sullen sounding roar,
Thro' the still night, dash'd hoarse along the shore:
All else was hush'd, as Nature's closed e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tow'r and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream.

When lo! on either hand the listening bard,
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the [k] goss drives on the wheeling hare;
And on th' auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers.

Here follows the dialogue betwixt

"The sprights that owre the Brigs of Ayre preside;"

which, as it is not only long, but in the broad Scottish dialect, I shall omit. I cannot, however, resist the pleasure of transcribing the closing lines of the poem.

What farther clishmaclaver might been said,
What bloody wars, if sprites had blood to shed,

---

[i] The two steeples. [k] The goss-hawk, or falcon.

No man can tell; but all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd, in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various tresses glanc'd:
They footed o'er the watery glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul ennobling bards heroic ditties sung.

The Genius of the stream in front appears,
A venerable chief, advanc'd in years;
His hoary head, with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg, with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet female Beauty, hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid beaming eye:
All chearing Plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn, wreath'd with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality, with cloudless brow.
Next follow'd Courage, with his martial stride,
From where the Feal wild woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair:
Learning and Worth, in equal measures trode,
From simple Catrine, their long-lov'd abode:
Last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazle wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken, iron instruments of Death;
At sight of whom our sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

The ideal personages above introduced, are so accurately drawn, and the epithets by which they are distinguished, are so remarkably appropriate, that the pencil itself could scarcely have given a more perfect representation. Were I to employ an artist to paint the scene here described, I would enjoin his adhering rigidly to the poet's sketch, in doing which he could not err, as he would then paint from Nature. The attendant attributes, and characteristics of the various personages, are all of them most happily fancied. What can be more appropriate for a river god, than that his "hoary head" should be crowned with "water lilies," and that "his manly leg" should be "with garter tangle bound?" "Rural Joy, crown'd with flow'ry hay," and "Summer, with his *fervid* beaming eye," are equally beautiful; nor is the next figure less picturesque:

> "All chearing Plenty, with her flowing horn,
> Led yellow Autumn, wreath'd with *nodding* corn."

THE END.

ERRATA.

Line 85, *for* decent *read* lady's.
—— 120, *for* erst *read* late.
Page 32, in note, *for* nipot *read* a spot.
Line 285, *for* oft, seen *read* oft-seen.
—— 287, *for* not *read* nor.

ERRATA TO PART SECOND.

Line 172, *for* unchain *read* enchain.

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